

Three In One

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Foreword

This book is a result of my life being changed from the inside out by the Lord Jesus. I will share two testimonies from two different times, twenty five years apart, when the Lord changed my life. I share this to give the background of my life and hopefully provide context for this book.

The Lord always tried to get my attention. At a young age I was sick and spent an entire school year in a hospital. My mother witnessed to me about the Lord and I read Gideons childrens' books in doctors' offices and in the hospital.

At age fifteen I had a World History teacher who offered bible studies before school on Tuesday and after school on Thursday. Two or three students showed up but eventually I was the only student who showed up. My teacher continued for an entire school year to hold these bible studies for one student. He later became a missionary to India. He introduced me to the biographies of Jim Elliot, Hudson Taylor, and C.T. Studd, instilling in me a desire to live for a purpose higher than just making money or a career.

My life was overshadowed by an unbelieving father who was sometimes antagonistic to the Christian faith. He made it difficult for me to progress in studying the Bible. My mother later told me he said things to purposely discourage me from reading the Bible. In the summer between the tenth and eleventh grades of school I attended the Institute of Basic Youth Conflicts at the invitation of my teacher. During that seminar I made a commitment to Christ.

Home life continued to deteriorate. My father abandoned my mother for another woman, and my parents divorced when I was seventeen years old.

I finished high school, joined the Army, and was expelled from the Army in less than two years with an alcohol problem. After the Army expelled me I met people who were on crack cocaine. My life spun out of control. This was during the year 1988. It was only a matter of time before I was dead, in jail, or in another rehab program.

My mother heard about a Christian residential program where young people could live in an environment which would help them get over drug and alcohol problems. I entered this program and two weeks later encountered the Lord Jesus in a decisive and life changing manner.

When the Lord set me free from drugs and alcohol he also cast demons out of me, he baptized me in the Holy Ghost, and revealed himself to me as a very real and present person. Overwhelmed by God's love I immediately knew I was translated out of darkness and into light. I still faced battles, temptations, and a lot of growing up. My mind needed God's word. I needed to be renewed in the spirit of my mind, but I was on the right track. I am thankful for the brethren the Lord put in my life during this time. Each one had a huge impact on my progress in the Lord.

Fast forward twenty five years.

Over the years since I was saved at the age of twenty one I slowly drifted from God's purpose for my life.

I spent about ten years working in the technology field, working for big companies in big cities, small companies in small towns, and a city government at one point. I still read the Bible, prayed, and went to church. However, something was fundamentally off in my life, and I felt helpless to do anything about it.

In 2013 we lived in San Antonio, Texas.

One day after talking to my mother I realized she was in a desperate situation and needed help. My wife and I already helped her some financially from Texas, but she needed someone in Georgia for her. It sounded like at the time no one was available. I felt the Lord tell me to leave Texas and go to Georgia and help my mother.

When we arrived in Georgia my heart was broken at the condition my mother was in. We got her back to her house out of a nursing home and began the process of helping her get back to health not only physically, but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

We arrived in Thomasville, Georgia in October 2013. I worked with my employer remotely until November 15, 2013. After this I looked for another job in technology in south Georgia or north Florida. I did not find work in my field. After months of job searching I wondered if God had something different in mind for me.

On August 4 and August 8, 2014 the Lord changed my life again in a similar manner as what happened twenty five years previously.

Early in the morning of August 4, 2014 I was lying in bed. I was not dreaming. I was awake and aware of my environment around me. I was not hallucinating. I heard God speak and he said, "Consider this one."

He talked about me but did not talk directly to me. I heard him as if he talked to himself. Then he said, "Mike".

When I heard my name a feeling enveloped me which reminded me of my mother and I almost jumped out of bed to check if she cried out for help. In an instant the account of Samuel and Eli in the Bible flashed in my mind and I knew it was the Lord.

He said, "Can you believe I am speaks to you?"

I said, "Yes, Lord, I believe you speak to me."

After my reply he filled me with his Spirit in a way I've never experienced before. It was not emotional. I did not cry or speak in tongues. Instead I felt my spirit vibrate and shimmer. The Lord imparted himself into my spirit.

A few minutes later I heard myself talking and realized the conversation with the Lord occurred in my spirit but was audible. I could not tell whether I heard him with my ears or whether all of this took place in my spirit. It was not a dream, not a hallucination, nothing like that. I was completely conscious and aware of everything around me.

I realized I spoke out loud in English (in contrast to speaking in tongues). I could hear what I said but did not understand the significance of it. It occurred to me I should write down the words.

These are the words I wrote down: "God is three in one. Prophet, priest, and king. Israel, church, and the kingdom. God is three days and then all is done in the New Jerusalem."

I did not comprehend the significance of the words when I wrote them down. Throughout August 4th and the following days I received revelation that sprang out of the vision. I sensed what the Lord put in my spirit bubbled up into my mind so I could understand it in small pieces over a period of time. As each revelation came to me I wrote it down. Everything came in the context of "God three in one, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, prophet, priest, king, Israel, church, and the kingdom." This did not leave me.

Throughout this experience I never lost control of myself, my body, or the ability to conduct myself normally to everyone around me. I described everything to my wife as it

happened. My behavior was understated and calm. I don't think it dawned on her something supernatural happened to me until days later on August 8 when she had a similar experience.

On August 8, 2014 I was lying in bed. I sensed the presence of God fill the room, and I felt a face looked down at me from the ceiling. I heard God speak and he said, "He will receive this, but he doesn't understand it." He filled me with the Holy Spirit again.

I sat up on the side of the bed and the Lord said to me, "Hidden manna."

I knew I should study the Bible for the words "hidden manna" and as I studied scripture what he gave me would make sense.

The reason I had difficulty comprehending what the Lord communicated was because I had not studied the Bible in a long time like I should have. I could not grasp quickly what the Lord said because of a lack of serious bible study in my life. I did not remember ever hearing the phrase "hidden manna" before this but I knew it must be in the Bible.

The experience turned my entire life right side up. I felt joy like I have not known in years. I no longer needed to know how I would survive or how we would pay bills without my having a job.

This book is based on the vision I received from the Lord. I am not saying this book is scripture or another gospel or a new doctrine. This book is my attempt to understand what God put inside my spirit. The Lord gave me a vision. This book is my attempt at working this vision out of my spirit, into my mind, and then translating it to other people. God forbid I create some new doctrine or teaching in the church. The following book contains Bible truth we need for such a time as this.

I include in the appendix of this book a compressed version of the visions as I wrote them down. This provides a condensed version of what the Lord instilled in me. I also include a prophetic dream my wife experienced on August 8, 2014.

Over the weeks after this experience the Lord showed me I should communicate the vision to others. I thought my ministry would be to drug addicts and alcoholics but I understand I am now assigned the task of washing the feet of the Lord's saints, and the church in due course will reach those who are lost when God sends revival.

I am no longer my own, no longer independent, no longer attempting to make my own way in life. Jesus is my way, and my life, and my truth. He is everything to me. He is my provision, my protection, and he is my prize and inheritance. I have no other desire but to obey the Lord Jesus and know him more every day. Since I heard God's voice I ache to hear his voice again. I hunger and thirst for the Lord Jesus. I feel an urgency to write this down and share with whoever will listen.

Please remember me in prayer. The enemy does not like Christians proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. I know I face trials in the future. There is no getting around that. The Lord is in control and I ask the saints who read this to remember me in prayer.

1. Introduction to the Lord's Servant

When I think of prophets I think of names like John the Baptist, Elijah, Elisha, and Moses. We know Abraham was a prophet though Abraham never wrote a book of “Thus saith the Lord” pronouncements. We know Job was a prophet. Some prophets became prophets by what God allowed to happen in their lives. Their life history foreshadowed and prophesied Christ. A good example of this is Joseph. God made men prophets in different ways and communicated his word to us by example, precept, principle, and by verbal prophetic utterance. All of this is written down and recorded in the Bible.

God makes prophets at times go through suffering. One reason is to teach the prophet himself. Another reason is to teach God's people spiritual lessons on patience and depending on God for everything.

Usually prophets are in humble situations for their sake, for the sake of their message, and also for the sake of the people their message is intended for. We can see this in the testimony of the apostle Paul who shared the troubles he endured for the sake of the gospel. (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

Hebrews 11 lists the heroes of the faith and prophets. It makes a specific note that the circumstances in each of their lives were different. Some saw great victory in their lives while others suffered tremendous persecution and challenges. All were commended for their faith.

This tells me the true concept of faith is above confession or attitude. Spiritual men suffer tremendously, and many wicked live on earth in prosperity. None of these external circumstances are any true indication of a man's standing with God.

The book of James describes Job as an example of a suffering prophet. Job's experience and suffering were a prophetic message to God's people. God revealed himself to us through the suffering of Job. (James 5:10-11)

Another prophet mentioned in the book of James is Elijah. Job is mentioned as an example of patience. Elijah is mentioned as an example of prayer. (James 5:17-18)

James uses these prophets in his letter as object lessons for his hearers. This is the intention of God in choosing prophets: to reveal himself to us, and to give us teaching and object lessons. Not only are the words of the prophets valuable, but their lives contain lessons and truth. Their lives are prophetic.

This can clearly be seen in the life of Abraham. The history of Abraham and his son Isaac are illustrations of Jesus. We see this mentioned in Hebrews 11:17-19. This concise summary shows the picture of Christ clearly.

The Old Testament is filled with men who were prophetic in their life history. The words and lives of prophets are valuable in teaching us about the Lord Jesus, who is indeed the Prophet prophesied by Moses. (Deuteronomy 18:15)

2. Law and Prophets

Isaiah 8:19-20, “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Jeremiah 23:22, “But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.”

Jeremiah 23:29, “Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?”

God gave Israel the honor of receiving God's word in the law and the prophets. The entire Old Testament is filled with God revealing himself through prophets who proclaimed God's word.

The prophets took God's word very serious. They did not just hear God's word but they put it into practice in their every day lives. God's word was recorded in books, memorized, studied, and meditated upon. There are many promises of God's blessing upon those who read, study, memorize, and meditate on God's word. (Psalm 1:1-3; Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

God's word was recorded by different people but it was always the Holy Spirit who inspired those who wrote down the scriptures.

The simplest purpose of the Bible is to reveal who God is. The Bible points us to the Lord Jesus who gives us eternal life. John 5:39-40, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

The prophets spoke at different times in the history of Israel. Many prophets were concentrated during the time when Israel and Judah were in spiritual decline leading up to the destruction of the nation at the hand of the Assyrians and Babylonians and during the time of restoration of the remnant to Jerusalem.

With every prophet there was a consistent message of God's hatred of sin, idolatry, and backsliding. The prophets warned of God's judgment against sin. Jeremiah stated a true prophet of God would stand in God's counsel and turn people away from their sins. (Jeremiah 23:22).

Another aspect of the message to God's people was love and restoration. In all the prophets to the Jewish people there was a message of God's desire to forgive, heal, and restore.

Besides the prophets which had books named after them there were also prophets who did not write books but whose words were recorded and even their personal ministries recorded. Good examples are Elijah, Elisha, Nathan, Gad, and also John the Baptist.

I include John the Baptist with the Old Testament prophets because Jesus placed John in that category. Matthew 11:13, “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.”

Moses once commented he wished all of God's people were prophets. Numbers 11:29, “And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the

LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!”

This is the ideal within the New Testament church in 1 Corinthians 14. Paul urged people to seek the spiritual gift of prophesying which is designed for the building, encouragement, and comfort of the church.

Ephesians 4:11-12 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 lists prophets as a gift to the church. There are prophets as there are pastors, teachers, evangelists, and apostles. It is unlikely we would hear their names, because this work requires humility and denying one's self and name. If I hear of someone with a title in front of their name like Prophet So-and-so I run the other way. The gift is not a title; it is a gift to the church. This gift washes the feet of the saints. He does not proclaim his own name. 2 Corinthians 4:5, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.” John the Baptist said, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” (John 3:30).

3. Purpose

The purpose of the prophet: proclaim God's name, preach God's word in order to turn people away from sin and to faith in Jesus, remind people to listen and obey God's voice, point out false gospels and false prophets, lead by example through trials and in prayer, and to demonstrate God provides for us.

Before Moses put pen to papyrus to record the word of God he had God's name. When Moses met God at the burning bush he told Moses his name.

Exodus 3:14, “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Moses had God's name. He had God who spoke to him and called him by his name. When God appeared to the prophet he said, “Moses, Moses”. He said to another, “Samuel, Samuel”. God knows a man's name and everything about him.

Exodus 3:4, “And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.”

Moses heard God's voice and received God's name. We need to hear God call our name and we need to know his name.

When correcting people the prophet said the people did not obey the voice of the Lord their God. We should understand God expects his people to hear his voice and hear him call their name. This is a normal way for a Christian to live in a close relationship to the heavenly Father. Jesus said his sheep hear his voice and follow him. (John 10:27)

The prophet reminds us God speaks. God has a voice and can be heard. Many people fear the voice of God. They fear because they love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. (John 3:19) They seek their own interests. (Philippians 2:21) God is rich in mercy (Ephesians 2:4) and speaks to prophets and sends them with his word. He sends prophets to turn people from evil and remind them of who God is, and to proclaim the name of the Lord. (Exodus 34:5)

Colossians 1:28, “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:”

In John chapter 17 Jesus mentions his Father's name. Jesus said he spoke his Father's name to his disciples. (John 17:6,11,12)

A man with a perfect heart toward God confesses, but a confession in itself does

not ensure God hears prayer. What is in the heart? Is there idolatry? Is there covetousness? Is there a rebellious attitude toward suffering? Let's examine our heart before the Lord and make sure our life lines up when we pray.

Let us be humble before the Lord and ask him to search us for errors, misunderstandings, worldly philosophies or man-made religious beliefs. (Psalm 139:23) The most sincere can be deluded by a false gospel which promotes idolatry and covetousness in the household of faith. I see a falling away today which reminds me of what is prophesied in scriptures. (2 Thessalonians 2:3) Let us guard our heart against deception and guard the precious deposit of God's Holy Spirit in us. (Proverbs 4:23)

Another purpose of a prophet is to lead God's people. They do not exercise Gentile or worldly authority. They do not lord it over God's people, but are called to lead God's people by example. They feed the flock of God. Prophets are a gift from the Lord to the church in order to build, encourage, and comfort God's people. (1 Corinthians 14:3)

1 Peter 5:2-4, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

4. Provision

The Lord provides. When Adam and Eve sinned God provided animal skins for a covering. (Genesis 3:21) The Lord watches over those who call on his name and who fear him. Obviously the Lord also provides for the wicked and evil as well, giving to everyone what they need to live.

However, the Lord makes special promises to those he chooses. The Lord makes a distinction between the way unbelievers get their needs met, and the way a believer has his needs met.

Matthew 6:31-33, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

An unbeliever thinks about their needs and desires constantly.

For the believer it is essential he trust in the Lord for provision and not allow himself to become consumed with needs and desires. The cares of life can choke the word of God planted in us. (Luke 8:14; Luke 21:34)

Prophets do not make agreements with the world system of government, business, or society. The obvious reason for this is their message flies in the face of the world system.

The Lord sends prophets to plead with people to turn them from evil. He sends prophets to turn people from Satan and to God. (Acts 26:18) A prophet speaks God's word and it is a consuming fire and a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces. (Jeremiah 23:29)

As a result prophets do not make a living by working for government, business, or society. The exception to this might be someone like the prophet Daniel who was a

prisoner and captive in the government of Babylon. However, even then, we know Daniel did not make agreements and was often in trouble along with his three friends.

How is a prophet supposed to live? This is a good question. Understand a prophet works for God, not for himself, and not for anyone else.

How does a man know he is prophet? (Numbers 12:6) No one should presume to be a prophet or take upon themselves this role in the church. A prophet's lifestyle is strenuous and peculiar in order to maintain the calling. It is not easy. The calling makes it necessary a man live a specific lifestyle others are not equipped for. (Jeremiah 26:20-23)

I'm not saying a prophet is a better man or a more spiritual man than other brethren in the church. He is only what God's grace makes him. (1 Corinthians 15:10) The gift is not by works. It is a gift like salvation is a gift from God. The lifestyle is different and it is a difficult way to live if a man is not equipped for it. When God chooses a prophet he equips him and sustains him. (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

The gift does not depend on man (Romans 11:29) but a man of God who is of any use will be an overcomer. He does not live carelessly but strives for holiness by standing in the finished work of Christ.

One spiritual gift is the ability to believe God for provision outside of the ordinary method of the world system. An example of this in action is Elijah. We read the personal history of Elijah and how God provided for him in 1 Kings 17. God provided for Elijah through birds bringing him bread and meat. The Lord had a poor woman, who never ran out of oil and flour, provide for herself and Elijah during a season of drought.

Learn the lesson of trusting God for daily bread. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11). Jesus taught his disciples to live simple lives depending on God's daily provision. This is the lesson taught to Israel in the wilderness when he daily sent them bread from heaven.

It is the lesson that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

This is the lesson we need to learn. It is impossible to fulfill the gift of prophet without learning the lesson of God's provision.

Prophets are outside the world system for a reason. They are an object lesson for the church. Their lives point toward a spiritual walk of faith God desires his children live in. We walk by faith, not by sight. We learn to depend on God and be content with what he provides for us. (Philippians 4:10-13; John 6:27)

1 Timothy 6:6-8, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."

5. Protection

When the Lord calls a man the Lord himself becomes provision, protection, and inheritance. This is a pattern seen in the Bible. When God spoke to Abram he promised to be his protection and his inheritance.

Genesis 15:1, "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."

Here are two parts of the threefold promise to prophets. God revealed to Abram the Lord was his protection and also the Lord was his reward. God three in one is provision, protection, and prize. Not everyone knows or believes this, but overcomers know the Lord is their home: he is provision, protection, and prize.

Prophets may find themselves in danger through unbelief, and sometimes because of obedience to God telling them to confront people.

Abraham got in trouble because he allowed fear to control his decisions. Even in those situations, however, the Lord intervened for Abraham and delivered him and Sarah from Gentile kings. (Genesis 20). Psalm 105:14-15, “He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes; Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.”

At other times God led the prophet to elude trouble through supernatural means as when Elijah outfoxed Ahab and Jezebel by laying low at the brook Cherith, and later by moving to Zarephath. (1 Kings 17)

When the Lord called Jeremiah he said unto him, “Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. (19) And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.” (Jeremiah 1:8, 19)

The Lord encourages his servant not to fear. Why is so much encouragement needed so the man of God won't be afraid? Because people hate him when he proclaims God's word. People hate him and persecute him. The Lord delivers and protects his servant, and sends people to help him.

When the Lord sent Ezekiel he exhorted him in Ezekiel 2:6, “And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.”

At times the Lord gives warning about potential danger from an enemy. (2 Kings 6:32) The Lord speaks to his servant to warn him about dangerous or murderous people and their intentions.

Examples of God's deliverance is seen in the life of David. After Samuel anointed David (1 Samuel 16:13) the Holy Spirit came upon him from that time on. It was not long afterward David entered a long season of persecution from King Saul. David fled from Saul for years. The Lord constantly protected David and delivered him from Saul. Many Psalms were inspired during these trials in David's life. One thing David learned and knew: the Lord was his protection.

Psalm 18:1-3, “I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.”

The Lord protects us. He delivers and rescues us. The Lord sends angels to watch over us. Psalm 91:11-12, “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

The Lord uses all means at his disposal to protect his servants. At times this is very supernatural as with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace or also

with Daniel in the lion's den. The Lord is able to protect his overcomers.

Not only does God use supernatural means but also he uses simple, plain folks to lend a hand. In Jeremiah chapter 38 the prophet was thrown into a dungeon where he sank down in the mud. The Lord sent Ebedmelech the Ethiopian to intercede with the king and rescued Jeremiah from the dungeon.

We see from these examples the Lord is our protector and our deliverer.

What does it mean when a servant of the Lord is not rescued from prison and when he is not rescued from death? An example is John the Baptist. Jesus himself said there was never a greater prophet than John, and yet John ended life a martyr.

How did God protect John the Baptist?

Understand there are times in God's wisdom and prudence he allows the enemy to persecute and kill prophets of the Lord. Jesus himself made mention of this.

Matthew 5:10-12, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Luke 12:4, "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."

Not everyone lives a Christian life free of pain and suffering. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12)

When men of God suffer – what does this mean? Does it mean they had less faith or did not have a certain quality or quantity of faith to pray through for deliverance and rescue? No!

Hebrews 11:35-40, "Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

God is our protector. He does protect us and keep us. However, sometimes the prize and the inheritance outweigh temporary safety. What God has laid up in heaven overrides temporary deliverance on earth.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

1 Peter 1:4, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you"

6. Prize

The servant works for the Master and is promised an inheritance. The Lord himself is the prize.

Jesus makes mention of reward in Matthew 10:41, “He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.”

What kind of reward is this in heaven? We can glimpse part of this reward in Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

It is a reward for the man of God that his ministry turned people to the Lord Jesus. His goal is for people to turn to God in repentance and put their faith in Jesus. Paul's constant goal was for every man he reached to be complete in their knowledge of the Lord. It is the honor of the Lord’s servant to lead people to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. (Daniel 12:3)

One aspect of the reward is to see the labor in the Lord was not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58) They will see the fruit of their labor in the lives brought into heaven.

The Lord himself is the reward of the prophet. God said to Abram, “I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.” (Genesis 15:1)

The labor of the servant is related to a world yet in the future. We see this kingdom with spiritual eyes, like Abraham who lived like a stranger and a pilgrim. Hebrews 11:10, “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

We suffer now but a day is coming when all sickness, sorrow, death, and tears will be put away. We look forward to the day when the Lord creates a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:13)

The next step toward this is the third day. We see day one in Israel. Day two we are currently living in which is the day of the church. Day three will be the day of God's kingdom on earth and the Lord Jesus will sit on the throne in Jerusalem and reign as King over all the nations of the earth. (Zechariah 14:16) The third day will last for one thousand years and then all will be complete in the new Jerusalem. (Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8; Revelation 20:2-7)

From the perspective of men there is one week in time. We currently live at the very end of the sixth day, and the seventh day is about to dawn, the day of the Lord, the kingdom which is prophesied through the Old and New Testament.

In the day of Israel there were prophets, priests, and kings. During the day of the church we see prophets and priests. In the day of the kingdom there will be a King, and the overcomers in Christ will reign with him. (Revelation 2:26-29; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 19:6)

Theologians devise systematic theologies to explain, categorize, and describe God's plan through history. People divide and subdivide the history of Israel and the Church. I would suggest a simple way of looking at the Bible, theology, Israel, the Church, and God's plan.

From the viewpoint of man we live in time and space represented in a seven day

week. These seven days are also seven thousand years. Man is given six days, and the seventh day belongs to the Lord. The seventh day is the kingdom age, and the millennial reign of Christ on earth.

The six thousand years are divided between Israel and the Church. Israel had four thousand years, the church has two thousand years. These two time periods, or elements of time, comprise the six thousand years of man.

I've described this system from the point of view of man within time and space.

From heaven there are only three days in eternity. The first day was Israel, the second day is the church, and the third day will be the kingdom. All three are one. The church does not replace Israel. True Israel is the church. And the church existed in Israel as a true, believing remnant, those who were of the faith of Abraham and the promise. Within the church there is a remnant that is the true spiritual bride of Christ who is the true Israel of God. You see how all of this is mixed together?

God is three in one. Israel, church, and the kingdom are three in one. Prophet, priest, and king. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Israel, church, and the kingdom.

Hosea 6:2, "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

I know, as Christians, we always associate "third day" with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the foundation and capstone of God's plan. Why did he rise from the dead on the third day? It points to the nature, character, and essence of God three in one! It is not a coincidence the Lord Jesus rose again on the third day. All these numbers, days, and times are significant in grasping who God is.

God is three in one. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Lord is also Israel, church, and the kingdom. He is also prophet, priest, and king.

He is also the three elements in the Ark of the Covenant: the law, Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna. (Hebrews 9:4) All of these elements are an expression of who God is. One ark: three elements. Each element is parallels Israel, church, and the kingdom. The law is Israel, Aaron's rod is the church, and the golden pot of manna is the kingdom.

Israel is the prophet. Acts 3:25, "Ye are the children of the prophets". Israel is clearly seen as a prophet proclaiming God's word. It was the prophet Moses God used to communicate God's law, it was the prophet David who brought us the Psalms, and it was a multitude of prophets who filled the Old Testament scripture. There is no doubt in my mind Israel is the prophet, and Israel is day one in God's three days.

Day one concluded when the Lord Jesus was rejected by the Jewish religious leaders and crucified. When the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom day one ended. I wonder if God counts the 70 years from the time of Jesus to the razing of Jerusalem in AD 70. I wonder about this because of the 70 years of Babylonian exile, and also because we are past 2,000 years on the calendar in the church day. Are we supposed to count another 70 years forward from AD 2000 to see the end time events unfold? I do not know. I believe, however, there are people connected to the fulfillment of last day's prophecy already on the world stage, though they may very young at this time (2014). (See Appendix B for a prophetic dream related to this subject.)

We will see a revived Israel during the kingdom which has put her faith in Messiah Jesus. (Romans 11:26) Let me add, I also believe the unbelieving nation of Israel

we see today is a part of God's plan. In every one of God's days all three elements of Israel, church, and the nations (kingdom) exist. Paul mentioned this in 1 Corinthians 10:32, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God". We always have these three elements present in each of the three days, but in each day one of the elements is front and center. God expresses himself mainly through one of Israel, church, or the kingdom depending on where we are at in time and space. However, all three are one and the same.

The prize of the prophet is the Lord himself. The Lord reveals himself to the prophet (Genesis 18:17), showing the prophet where he stands in time and space and what is the next step the Lord takes. He does this so the prophet will plead with God's people to get ready. He does this so the prophet will pray and intercede. It is the prophet's prize and inheritance to see many turn to God in repentance and put their faith in the Lord Jesus.

7. Descriptions

We can learn a biblical principle from Samuel and David. After King Saul failed God because of unbelief and disobedience the Lord sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint a new king for Israel. God did not give Samuel a specific name, but told him to go to the family of Jesse in Bethlehem. Many times this is how the Lord deals with his servants. He gives us simple instructions and expects us to obey. We don't know all the details. We might speculate but we cannot know until we first simply walk in obedience to the Lord's instructions.

Remember when Saul was anointed king he stood head and shoulders above his brethren. He had a majestic and regal appearance but his heart was not right with God. This symbolizes how unclean, Gentile authority lord it over their subjects.

When God sent Samuel to Jesse's family there was a much different kind of king the Lord had in mind. This king would also be a prophet, he would understand the true function of a priest in intercession and reconciliation, and he would also be a king foreshadowing King Jesus. This king would be a man after God's own heart.

Samuel went through all of Jesse's sons and did not find the right one to be anointed king. (1 Samuel 16:7) He had to ask Jesse if there were any other sons, and finally they brought in David.

David had a different appearance. He was the youngest of Jesse's sons and the most unlikely candidate. He was out tending sheep when Jesse lined up David's brothers to be inspected by the prophet.

1 Samuel 16:12-13 describes David and the anointing of Samuel. "And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah."

No doubt this scene was in David's mind when he wrote Psalm 23.

David was unique as a man anointed by God. In his life he filled all three roles of God at different times. He was a prophet, a priest, and a king. In many ways, David was

a very clear picture of the Messiah. No wonder then the Messiah is called the Son of David. Jesus is the Son of David literally by lineage. He also fulfills all the foreshadowing of the Messiah we see throughout the life of David.

We have another description of a prophet in 2 Kings 1:7-8, “And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

Why do we have such specific descriptions of a prophet's physical appearance? Think back to what the Lord told Samuel. Man looks on the outward appearance. Unbelievers recognize there is something different about a prophet, and they put this into words by giving descriptions of their physical appearance. Somehow they sense and know a man is full of the Spirit of God but they are unable to process this spiritually. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Thus we have descriptions of the physical appearance of prophets.

Paul explains Christians have the smell of death to an unbeliever. 2 Corinthians 2:15-16, “For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?”

When Elijah's description was given, he knew immediately who it was.

Another prophet given a detailed physical description was John the Baptist. Matthew 3:4, “And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.”

In John's description we also have what he ate. This description helps us understand John lived outside the world system. A prophet lives outside the system; his calling demands total reliance on God for provision and protection.

8. Agree With God

Prophets agree with God and make no agreement with the world system. In a nutshell, the world system consists of government, business, and society. The man of God works directly for the Lord.

The world is outlined spiritually by John in 1 John 2:15-17, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

The three distinct spiritual parts of the world system are: (1) the lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life. The overcoming Christian should memorize this and ask the Lord for discernment.

The machinery, or external body of the world system, is: (1) Government, (2) Business, and (3) Society. Each part is a distortion of the glory of God. The Christian cannot escape this outward machinery of the world system. Jesus prayed in John 17:15, “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Christians are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14). We bring the Kingdom of God with us into all of these areas.

It is easy to become absorbed into this world system. For many, it is the love of

money that gets them. For others, it may be immorality or the desire for prestige.

Christians are tempted by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Depending on where they work they become more vulnerable to certain aspects of the world system and evil spirits.

The Christian who works in the realm of government is tempted by man's strength and carnal power. This is the lust of the flesh. This is also why governments make war. (James 4:1) Government is probably lying when they say they go to war to protect their country. This is not necessarily the case but primarily governments make war because of the lust for strength and power. Domination is the heart of government.

The Christian in the realm of business (primarily business leaders) are tempted by money. This is idolatry and covetousness. Idolatry and covetousness go hand in hand with sexual immorality and promiscuous behavior. This is the lust of the eyes. We covet what we see with our eyes. We worship what we covet.

This is a difficult place for a Christian to maintain a consistent walk of victory in the Lord Jesus but it can be done. Nothing is impossible with God. Jesus said it is as difficult as a camel threading the eye of a needle but nothing is impossible with God. (Matthew 19:24-26)

The Christian who works in the realm of Society is tempted by prestige, position, and power through reputation. Society includes civic leaders, religious leaders, business leaders, and citizens. Jobs in this area include pastors, priests, lawyers, doctors, nurses, police, firemen, technology support – any person who serves the community. These people are tempted by desire for promotion, position, and prestige. There is a big emphasis placed on continuing education in order to climb to higher positions in this hierarchy.

People working in non-profit organizations aggressively seek prestige in their community. They incorrectly believe this is where their help and strength come from. They enjoy titles, as in director, pastor, reverend, or doctor. This is the pride of life.

The prophet may be led by God to correct people in all of these areas. This is another reason why it is impossible for the prophet to get his provision by making agreements with this world system. This reminds me of an old song by Keith Green. Here are some of the lyrics of his song:

Well, I pledge my head to heaven for the gospel,
And I ask no man on earth to fill my needs.
Like the sparrow up above, I am enveloped in his love,
And I trust him like those little ones, he feeds.

Well I pledge my wife to heaven, for the gospel,
Though our love each passing day just seems to grow.
As I told her when we wed, I'd surely rather be found dead,
Than to love her more than the one who saved my soul.

I remember over twenty years ago when I first heard this song I cried tears of consecration to the Lord Jesus who is worthy to be praised. It is worth dying for Jesus. It is worth giving my life completely for the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no one else I

want to live for, but for him who died for me and rose again. This song takes on a new meaning in our current situation when we hear of people literally being murdered for Jesus all over this planet. Are we willing to die for Jesus? I pray if it ever comes to that, God's grace will sustain me and I may die bringing honor, glory, and praise to name of Jesus.

Prophets agree with God. They do not make agreements with the world system.

9. Testing

There is a danger the Lord's servant will develop spiritual pride and think he is better than others. The consecration of making no agreements is a humiliation which helps keep this problem to a minimum. Spiritual pride, however, is a real danger.

We do not automatically place an evangelist on an elevated pedestal. What about pastor? What about teacher? There is not as much danger of pride with these gifts. Depending on the individual, of course, there can still be pride in these as well.

However, when I say "apostle", or when I say "prophet" it is very difficult, even in our thoughts, not to assign prominence. Pastors can be regular Christians (in our mind). Somehow prophets are out of the ordinary. This is from the perspective of the carnal mind. (Romans 8:6-7; 1 Corinthians 2:14)

As a result of the delusions of grandeur surrounding these gifts the Lord inflicts humiliation for those performing these jobs in the church. It's not always the prophet's fault, either. Sometimes it is because people are superstitious and put prophets and apostles in a special category.

It seems the enemy singles out apostles for special opposition. 1 Corinthians 4:9-13 reveals from Paul how apostles are treated by the world and church. 1 Corinthians 4:9, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." These are not words of someone enjoying a "prestigious" title of apostle.

The Lord allows this opposition to help his servant remain humble. Paul relates in 2 Corinthians 12:7, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." Pride is a struggle in this ministry.

The next test is provision. Prophets operate outside the world system. In this regard he faces tests of service and life. These are not tests of passing or failure only but are also tests of life and death.

1 Kings 13 provides the history of a prophet and also another prophet. On the surface this account appears bizarre and hard to comprehend. It is only when this account is viewed as a test in regard to provision does it make sense.

To get a clear picture I need to take a step back and recount the life of another prophet whose name was Balaam. Balaam's history recounts how God used a donkey to rebuke the prophet. The donkey reproved the madness of the prophet Balaam. (2 Peter 2:16). What was this madness? Balaam was a prophet who prostituted his gift for money. The Bible says he loved the wages of unrighteousness. (2 Peter 2:15). He was a prophet for money.

We see the attitude of Peter and of the Lord towards mixing money and ministry

in Acts 8:20, “But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.”

Jude 11, “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.”

2 Peter 2:15-16, “Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.”

Revelation 2:14, “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”

This mad prophet prostitutes his ministry for money. It is clear Balaam was only interested in money. Also, keep in mind how prominent the donkey is portrayed in the history of the mad prophet.

Now we can return to the prophets in 1 Kings 13. This account starts out really well for the man of God from Judah. He is obedient to God and delivers God's message. When King Jeroboam rises up in anger against him God strikes the king by freezing his hand. This is evidence the Lord protected this prophet from any retaliation from the king. King Jeroboam recognized this man of God from Judah was under God's protection. He pleaded with the prophet to intercede for him and was healed.

What is the result of this confrontation? King Jeroboam offers provision and a reward to the prophet. The prophet walked in his anointing and rejected the king's provision. (This reminds me of the story of the prophet Daniel, as well). At this point the prophet from Judah was obeying God.

In verse 9 the prophet received a word from God about provision and he was not allowed to retrace his steps. The implication of this is enormous, because this is not only for this prophet but is for all prophets. It is the principle of relying only on Jehovah for provision (Matthew 6:33) and also never to retrace our steps (Luke 9:62). New wine cannot be poured into old wine skins. (Matthew 9:17) We can never go backwards. We have to go forward.

The really important part I want to draw our attention to is the issue with provision. 1 Kings 13:9, “For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.” The instruction for this prophet related to how he should not receive provision. He had no problem seeing he could not accept the king's bread. This is obviously making an agreement with government.

Now the account takes a strange twist. An older prophet hears about the man of God from Judah. He has compassion on him and desires to help the man of God from Judah. He invites him home to eat bread. Initially the man of God continues to resist and declines the invitation, restating again he was instructed not to eat bread in that place. The word “bread” is repeated over and over in this account. This is a clue this is a warning to all prophets to beware how they receive bread.

The older prophet, out of compassion, deceived this man of God from Judah, and told him God wanted him to accept bread from the older prophet.

The man of God from Judah believed the lie and disobeyed simple instructions

from God. As a result, while they ate, God's word came to the old prophet and he prophesied regarding the death of the man of God from Judah. The man of God from Judah saddled his donkey, departed, and was killed by a lion.

This story underlines the donkey and lion stand by passively beside the corpse of the man of God from Judah as a witness and a testimony. There's no doubt in my mind the donkey represents Balaam and the prophet's failure in this test of provision. The lion can be no other than Satan himself, the devil. 1 Peter 5:18, "...the devil as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

This is how serious the test of provision is for the prophet. A prophet cannot make agreements with government, business, or society. To do so means losing the anointing and becoming a prey to the enemy.

In the account of the prophets in 1 Kings 13 no names are mentioned. These are anonymous prophets. Another test of a prophet is not making a name for one's self.

In Revelation 3:12 Jesus makes a promise to overcomers he will write the name of his God and the name of the city of his God upon the overcomer. He will also write his new name upon the overcomer.

When Jesus was on his way to Calvary he taught his disciples to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. Christians think this means they simply tack on to the end of a prayer "in the name of Jesus". I'm not saying we should not include "in the name of Jesus" with prayer. I do think we should take time to receive an understanding of what this means.

When an ambassador is sent by a country they carry the authority of that nation. An ambassador carries the name of their country as authority. They do not have power in themselves. They do not accomplish anything in their name but do everything in the name of their country.

This is similar to when a messenger is sent by a king. There is an account of how King David sent ambassadors to the Ammonites (2 Samuel 10) to express his condolences at the death of their king. Hanun, the son of the deceased king, received David's messengers and treated them shamefully by cutting off their beards and their clothes. When David heard this it was as if Hanun did this to David himself. David was enraged and this led to war between Israel and the Ammonites. The point is this: these messengers carried David's name, and in his name they represented his authority and power.

When we take the name of Christ we receive the authority of King Jesus. However, I think Christians take the name of Jesus in word only but not into the heart. They call themselves Christian but live like the world. They make a name for themselves rather than making the name of the Lord great and glorious.

People make a name for themselves. In the account of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11 we see this desire for making a name for one's self and the self exaltation of making a name. These people wanted to make a name for themselves so they wouldn't be scattered over the world. Why is this? What's the big deal with everyone going their own way? These people desired prestige, protection, and provision. All of this required numbers of people. The more numbers the more prestige, protection, and provision. The devils told Jesus their name was Legion for they were many. There is a reason the Lord

Jesus exposed the name of these devils. This principle of making a name and numbers is seen at the tower of Babel. Their power is in name and numbers. This is still true today. Men make a name for themselves and multiply their power through numbers of people they bring into submission under their name. One will even receive a number under a government (social security number), or a number when you work for a corporation (employee number). Men practice these methods of control for prestige, provision, and protection. I doubt the people who put these principles into motion realize what they are doing. They are controlled by the evil spirit who works in all unbelievers. (Ephesians 2:2)

Overcomers have an intuition they should deny themselves, deny their own name, and take the name of Jesus. We gather together with Jesus. We do not scatter, we gather in his name. Our authority is in him, not in ourselves, not in our numbers.

“It is finished”, Jesus said. (John 19:30) The Lord Jesus completed the work of redemption and we believe and rest in the finished work of Christ. We are one with him.

Becoming one with Christ is taking his name and denying our name. Jesus said unless you deny yourself and take up your cross you cannot be his disciple.

Those in Christ have his name written on them. Only those with the name of Christ on them can truly pray “in Jesus' name”. You must be in Christ to pray in Christ's name. If you are not living in Christ merely saying “in Jesus' name” does not accomplish anything.

The tests of the prophet I have outlined are humility, provision, and denying one's own name.

10. Authority

Once a servant of the Lord is tested in areas of humility, provision, and names he receives authority from the Lord.

This authority is described as hidden manna in Revelation 2:17, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

Remember the ark of the covenant again. The elements within the ark were the law, Aaron's rod, and the golden pot of manna.

This manna was hidden manna because it was put away whereas the manna the people ate was public manna. The manna the people ate that tasted of oil and honey was the public manna available to everyone.

The law parallels Israel and Aaron's rod parallels the church. This is day one and day two of God's three days.

The third day is the kingdom represented by the hidden manna. To eat of the hidden manna is to receive kingdom authority, and with it the power to act in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

This is revealed to God's people by revelation from God three in one. This is given to those the Lord chooses. (John 15:16) We hear God's voice, because the sheep hear the shepherd's voice.

As the servant abides in the name of the Lord he moves into a new dwelling place. This is a home where he and the Lord live together. (Revelation 21:3) In this place there

is provision, protection, and the Lord is the prize.

In scripture we see prophets speak in the name of the Lord. They spoke the word of blessing and cursing and words of life and death. In the New Testament we still are concerned with life and death. The wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus. (Romans 6:23)

In the world system government is the distortion of the prophet. The business realm is the distortion of the priest. Society is the distortion of the king.

As Jesus said his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36) the prophet is not of this world. We are given authority now which will be fully expressed in day three of the kingdom Age.

What is this authority? It is authority to proclaim the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 9:6). It is authority to lay hands on the sick and heal them (Mark 16:18). It is authority to cast out devils (Matthew 12:28) and destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). All of this authority is given to us and is not only for apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers. This authority is given to every Christian who takes Christ's name and denies their own life and name. Any Christian who completely submits themselves to the Lord Jesus can walk in the authority the Lord gives in his name. We are ambassadors for Christ.

The prophets in Israel's history had authority to anoint kings for Israel. Samuel anointed Saul and David as king. Other prophets were involved in anointing kings in Israel as well.

The job was not done with anointing kings. They also were watchman of the king, and if the king stepped out of line they reproved him.

Most of us are not persevering in this responsibility of reprovng government, business, and society. The message from Christian leaders is self-help. It is about living the good life. As a result, gangrene spreads through government, business, and society. Christians should be salt and light to act as a preservative against decay.

11. Low Profile

Why is it important to deny one's name and keep a low profile? There are two reasons which I cover here: (1) provision, (2) pride.

Pride is the enemy of God's anointing. A man infected with pride cannot abide in the Lord. The Lord hates pride and opposes any man who walks in pride. God opposes the proud.

James 4:6, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." 1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Proverbs 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

When the Bible repeats a message in the Old and the New Testament I pay attention. There is an important message God is communicating to us.

Prophets have a public ministry and there is danger of falling into the delusion of esteeming oneself higher than he ought to. (Romans 12:3) This is a dangerous problem. This is why prophets are in humiliating situations in life. The humiliation is the

consecration, and the consecration is the humiliation. Prophets live outside the world. This is on purpose. The anointing rests on the man of humility. A man who is humble cannot fit in the world in any shape, form, or fashion. The world demands a person have pride and ambition in order to fit.

This brings me to provision. For a prophet, Jehovah is provision. Jesus is the bread of life. Jesus is provision for the prophet. It is tempting to look to other people for provision or to make agreements with people for provision. Making agreements with people for provision causes the prophet to lose his anointing. The “gift and calling is without repentance” (Romans 11:29), but the anointing fades when a prophet compromises. Why? A prophet works directly for God not man. He can never be under another man for provision. A man who does not know his gift may try for a while to fit into the system but ultimately fails. The prophet works for God. God is his provider and his provision.

Does this mean the prophet can never receive help? No, but people who help will not make agreements with the prophet. They do not attempt to bring a man of God into bondage. The prophet knows when he can accept help from someone. The examples I'm thinking of are Elisha. He was given an apartment by the Shunemite woman in 2 Kings 4:8-10. Also, Elijah and the widow at Zarephath is another example in 1 Kings 17:8-10. These people did not bring the prophet into bondage.

Provision comes from God because the prophet works for God. 1 Corinthians 9:14, “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”

Do not think I imply every Christian lives like this. The majority of Christians are supposed to work in the world system to be salt and light. However, prophets are gifts to the church, and part of being a gift to the church is a different lifestyle and testimony.

Deliverance from self is necessary for the prophet. Deliverance from self is accomplished in the same way as forgiveness of sins. It is by faith in the finished work of Christ.

The “self” life must be put down. Jesus said his disciples would deny themselves and take up their cross. To understand taking up the cross is fundamental. It means to see by revelation I am crucified with Christ. When Christ was crucified, I was crucified with him. I am made one with Christ, even as Christ is one with the Father. Read John chapter 17 to see what I am describing. I am one with Christ, even as Christ is one with the Father. I am one with Christ. My oneness with Christ in crucifixion deals the death blow to “self” life.

Other words for “self” in the Bible are old man, flesh, or carnal man. All of this returns to humility and not making a name for one's self. To make a name for one's self is the same as denying the name of Christ. Only when I deny my own name, which is myself, can I truly take on Christ's name and be a Christian. Truly a Christian is one with Christ. This oneness cannot be made with the person who seeks his own life or seeks to build or make his own name. He who seeks to save his life will lose it, but he who loses his life for Christ will find it.

The reason people want to make a name for their own self goes back to provision. The purpose for pride and asserting one's own self is so a person can obtain money and power. It goes back to provision. Jesus said this is the attitude of the world. But for the

Christian we seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness and these other things are added unto us.

Matthew 6:31-34, “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

For the Christian working in the world system of government, business, or society there is only one goal and it is not to make money. The only goal for a Christian in the work force is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Jesus promised he will take care of our needs. Our purpose in working is to be a witness for the Lord Jesus where he places us. If this is our goal we will overcome temptation that come with working in the world system. If our heart is right, we overcome in any situation God puts us. Colossians 3:23, “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”

A prophet keeps a low profile and Christians in every calling should do the same. Christians are not here to make a name but to exalt the Lord Jesus in every capacity we can.

Now we begin to see how it is important to be low profile. We must decrease, and he must increase. (John 3:30)

12. Pray

Ezekiel 22:30, “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”

God is obligated by his justice to execute judgment. When people sin it affects creation and has an impact on the land. The entire creation groans because of our fall into sin and it eagerly awaits God's restoration. (Romans 8:22)

It is not known by me why God desires to use men who stand in the gap or make up the hedge. This passage is describing a man of prayer.

God looks for people who intercede in prayer to hold back the tidal wave and downward spiraling effects of sin. Men of prayer intercede with God and allow God to use them to hold back sin, and so also God's inevitable judgment upon sin.

Abraham knew this principle when he interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord revealed to Abraham his judgment was imminent upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Amos 3:7, “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” This is for several purposes. One purpose is for the prophet to warn people and turn them away from their sins. Another reason is because God desires men to be intercessors.

Because of what Jesus accomplished in his finished, completed work we can approach the throne of God with confidence to pray and intercede. It is the Lord's will to give us grace and mercy in our time of need. We need to pray and ask for it not only for

ourselves but also for our families, our coworkers, our community, and for our nation.

1 Timothy 2:1-4, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

We also pray and ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers and workers into the harvest field to seek and to save those who are lost. (Luke 10:2)

Remember, also, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. (Psalm 122:6)

When Abraham interceded it was according to the principle that God would not destroy the righteous with the wicked. We should remember this when considering events in the last days. The Lord does not destroy the righteous with the wicked. The Lord has always removed or hid the righteous when his wrath was poured out on any people. 1 Thessalonians 5:9, “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”

Abraham interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah on this principle. Where did he get this idea? He got it from the Lord, because Abraham was a prophet.

Prophets are not just spokesmen but they are prayer intercessors.

This is pointed out in James 5:17, “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.”

In the last days God's wrath will not be designed for discipline or correction, it will be designed as punishment upon the wicked who will not repent (Revelation 9:21). This is outlined graphically in the book of Revelation.

When Abraham interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah no doubt he was thinking of his nephew Lot and his family. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom.

The Lord heard Abraham and rescued Lot out of those doomed cities.

2 Peter 2:7-9, “And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished”.

The prophet Daniel was an intercessor. He prayed three times a day, and when he understood from the prophecies of Jeremiah a remnant would return to Jerusalem after 70 years he earnestly prayed for his people. Daniel's prayer is recorded in Daniel chapter 9, and is one of the most powerful prayers in the Old Testament. I often read Daniel chapter 9 and pray for the church. I pray the Lord will have mercy on us and cause people to humble themselves, repent, and receive a fear of God in their lives. Daniel definitely had a deep and reverential fear of God. This is how he addresses the Lord: “O Lord, the great and dreadful God...” (Daniel 9:4)

One quality we sorely lack in the church is a deep and reverential fear of God. We need God's fear in our hearts. God's fear will cause us to pray and to intercede with real sincerity and with genuine earnestness.

When we think of prayer we usually are thinking in terms of asking God to bless us and also to bless our friends. However, in scripture we see another kind of prayer

modern Christians who have never experienced persecution would think a foreign concept in prayer. These are prayers God will send judgment upon the wicked. These kind of prayers do not originate in man's heart, but come from the heart of God. These prayers are a reflection of God's hatred and anger towards sin and towards men who will not repent of their sins.

We see David, a man after God's own heart, praying judgment upon God's enemies in the book of Psalms.

Another prophet we see praying for God's judgment was the weeping prophet Jeremiah.

When people hear God's word preached they know the gospel and know God is real but instead of repentance they harden their heart against God. Proverbs 29:1, "He, that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Only the Lord knows when he is finished with someone. It is not like God draws a line in the sand and says if we cross this line he refuses to love us anymore. However, people become hardened in their sin and become incapable of believing God's word any more. They develop a reprobate mind. These people despise God's grace and reject the work of the Holy Spirit. They can no longer be brought to feel conviction for sin, righteousness, or judgment. In these cases, God's Spirit prays through the prophet and reveals what will happen to these wicked people. Psalm 7:11, "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day."

We see prophets proclaim God's word and intercede for God's people and their enemies. There are examples when they prayed for themselves in repentance towards God.

David is a good example of prayers of repentance. Psalm 51 records his prayer of repentance in regard to Bathsheba and also Uriah. I repeat the words of this psalm when I fail God and seek God's mercy and forgiveness in prayer.

Psalm 51:10-12, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

David understood he could not fix his heart. He was broken by sin. He knew only the Lord could give him a new heart. It is the Lord who makes us alive. It is the Lord who gives us the ability to recognize our heart is not right and there is something wrong with us. David prayed and asked the Lord for a clean heart and a right spirit. No matter how hard men try to cleanse their conscience with worldly psychology, philosophy, and man-made religious systems only the Lord can give a clean heart and a right spirit. This is a gift from God.

David is concerned for keeping God's presence and God's Spirit. A man of God sees and recognizes that without God's presence and God's Holy Spirit he is nothing. He can do nothing.

Zechariah 4:6, "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. "

In John 15:5 Jesus says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

Moses, speaking to God, said he would not go up unless God's presence went with him. (Exodus 33:14-16)

A man of God values God's Spirit and God's presence above all things. He fears doing anything which would grieve the Holy Spirit or cause God's presence to withdraw from him. Unlike Eli, who didn't seem concerned about Samuel's prophecy regarding the departure of God's glory, a true servant of the Lord is terrified God's Spirit or presence would leave him. He realizes without God he is a dead man. Without the Lord's anointing, he is prey unto the enemy. A man of God is willing to suffer anything, sacrifice anything, if only he can walk in God's presence and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This walking in the Lord's presence is the same thing Paul wrote about when he said he wanted to know Christ. He counted everything as dung compared to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord. Being in the Lord's presence is to know him, to experience him, and to be filled with his Holy Spirit.

Philippians 3:7-8, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

The heart of a prayer of repentance is to be restored to the presence of the Lord. Sin separates us from God. Isaiah 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

A man of God knows sin separates him from God and will live a life as clean as possible to avoid grieving the Holy Spirit, and if he does sin he is quick to renounce the sin, repent, and confess to the Lord. (1 John 1:9)

Another one of David's frequent prayers was for God's deliverance. In Psalm 18:2 David declares the Lord is his deliverer. There are many prayers of David in the Psalms for God's deliverance. David was hunted down by King Saul and constantly needed the Lord's help in delivering him from the hand of his enemy.

Paul also mentions deliverance in 2 Corinthians 1:9-10, "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

Paul says God did deliver, he is delivering, and he will yet deliver us. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He will never leave us or forsake us. If the Lord has delivered me in the past I can encourage myself by remembering what the Lord did for me. I don't want to be like Israel in the wilderness and forget what God did for me. (Psalm 78:11; Psalm 106:13; Psalm 106:21)

There is a real enemy out there. We pray we may be delivered from this enemy. Jesus gave us an example of praying for deliverance. Matthew 6:13, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

We are warned about this enemy throughout the New Testament. There is an accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Jesus told his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane to watch and pray. This spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. He told them to pray they would not fall into temptation. (Matthew 26:41)

Peter learned how this enemy sifts a man as wheat. He wrote in 1 Peter 5:8-9, "Be

sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”

We need to pray for deliverance from evil and temptation. Not only do some never pray for deliverance but they run headlong into temptation and into evil. How can a Christian think he will remain pure while constantly putting empty vanity in front of his eyes. We listen to emptiness, we look at emptiness, and wonder why we walk around feeling so empty and dry spiritually. Christians run headlong into the arms of the enemy. It is as if we are completely asleep!

I'll never forget a dream I had once from the Lord. This was when I was a new Christian, and I still did not understand my gift from the Lord. I thought all Christians experienced this stuff.

In the dream I stood in a countryside. It was a countryside of green grass and no trees. Just wide open rolling green grasslands.

Beside me was a long line of people standing in single file formation. Somewhere in the far distance I heard the sound of a wet “thud”, “thud”, “thud”.

I was struck with a feeling of terror and I did not know why. As my fear mounted I screamed at the people standing in the line. They would not even turn in my direction or pay any attention to me. It was like no one could hear me. I tried pulling on their shirt sleeves to force them to get out of line, but they slipped out of my fingers. It was like I could not touch them.

I ran toward the beginning of the line. The closer I got the more I saw a rectangular box shape in the distance, like a box turned on its side. I saw the box glimmer or glint with light each time there was a wet “thud” sound.

In a few moments my running speed accelerated to that of a racing horse or a car. I realized with horror the box object was a guillotine. The people in line were voluntarily putting their heads into the mechanism for the executioner.

I saw some people I knew at that time in my life putting their heads down into the mechanism and their heads rolled to my feet. Their eyes looked at me in shock and amazement. I awoke crying, shaking, terrified!

I don't know if anyone will be able to understand the importance that we pray for deliverance.

Luke 21:35-36, “For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

In Noah's day there was only one family that escaped God's wrath and judgment on the earth. Do you think you would have believed Noah's message? Do you believe the message you are receiving right now?

13. A Prophet Like Moses

Deuteronomy 18:15, “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;”

Acts 3:22, “For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.”

Acts 3:24-25, “Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.”

Moses saw a day when the prophecy of the seed would be fulfilled. Moses said there would arise a brother in Israel who would be a prophet like Moses. Moses commanded them they should listen to the words of this prophet.

We know this prophecy was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus, for Peter declares what Moses spoke of was indeed fulfilled in the Lord Jesus. He goes on to say that Israel is the children of the prophets.

In what ways is Jesus a prophet like unto Moses?

He was like Moses in that he spoke God’s word to the people. A good example of this is Matthew chapters 5 through 7, where Jesus preached the law of the kingdom of God.

He is also like Moses in that he is the head of a household. Moses was considered a faithful servant in God’s household, and Jesus came as a servant to his household. He is now the head over the church. (Hebrews 3:5-6). We see a comparison made, and yet Jesus is magnified over Moses.

Jesus is also a prophet like unto Moses in that he spoke concerning things that were in the future.

Jesus spoke a lot about the end of the age and gave descriptions of what the world would be like when he returned as King over the nations. (Matthew 24)

Jesus was also a prophet like Moses in the sense that he reproved, corrected, and rebuked Israel in the hope of bringing them to repentance and to eternal life.

The Jewish leaders in the day of Jesus were proud of their exact knowledge of the scriptures. John 5:39-40, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

Also, in Matthew 23 we can read what the Lord said in reproving the Jewish religious leaders of that day.

Jesus was like Moses in that he lived among us but was separate, holy, and consecrated. It was obvious to others Jesus lived a holy, consecrated life. He even challenged his critics to convict him of sin. (John 8:46). They could not do it. Jesus was completely pure and without any sin. (1 Peter 2:22)

When Moses told Israel there would one day come a prophet like him he was moving in one of the gifts of prophets, and that is telling what is yet to happen.

God uses this throughout scripture to glorify his name and convince people he is

God.

Isaiah 46:9-10, “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

God knows the end from the beginning. He speaks through prophets to tell people what will come to pass so they will believe on his name and trust in him at all times.

The purpose, therefore, of prophecy is to reveal who God is, to warn people, and to cause people to fear the Lord and to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

The Lord condemns anyone who seeks out those who foretell the future by the evil spirit. Anyone who seeks to know the future by a fortune teller or familiar spirit come under God’s wrath and judgment.

1 Samuel 15:23, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.”

2 Chronicles 33:6, “And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.”

Micah 5:12, “And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers:”

Galatians 5:19-21, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Revelation 9:20-21, “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

Revelation 21:8, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

The reason I am including so many scriptures here is because of how popular witchcraft is in our current time. Everywhere a person looks, especially around Halloween time of the year, there are witches and people pretending to be witches. This is evil stuff! Don’t mess with this or participate in anything that glorifies witchcraft, sorcery, or fortune tellers. This includes the horoscope in the newspaper.

Now getting back to our discussion on a prophet like unto Moses! I believe Father God parallels the role of the prophet in the triune Godhead. The prophet speaks God’s word. Jesus is also known as the Word of God. In eternity I see the Father as the prophet who speaks the Word, and all of creation comes into existence.

The New Testament only mentions Jesus being like a prophet in fulfillment of what Moses said. But in a sense Jesus is not a prophet like anyone else because he was

and he is the very Word of God. Jesus never said anywhere “Thus saith the Lord”. He simply opened his mouth (Matthew 5:2) and spoke to the people, and with authority because he himself is the prophetic Word spoken by Father God.

Revelation 19:10, “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Here we see a warning to those who carry God’s word to others. Do not allow people to ascribe worthiness to you, or seek to elevate you or give you titles. This is the subtlety of the enemy. He seeks to instill pride, arrogance, or put you into a position or give you prestige.

Worship God!! Do not be led astray, but know who you are. You are a fellow servant and a brother to all those who carry the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14. Introduction to The Priest

God is three in one. He is one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are also expressed in the three days of Israel, church, and the kingdom. This also parallels the roles of prophet, priest, and king. All of this can be seen examining the contents of the Ark of the Covenant in Hebrews 9:4 and by a comparison of the different types of manna in Exodus 16:31, 33 and Numbers 11:7-8.

I have talked about Israel as the prophet in the first part of this book. Israel is the prophet who proclaims God’s word. We can see Father God as a prophet who proclaims his word and the universe was created. All of creation reflects the glory of God in this “three in one” principle of life.

The priest represents the people to God. Jesus is the high priest over all his household of priests because he represents us before God and is now interceding for us. Hebrews 7:25, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

This role of priest is important because man is separated from God as a result of sin. The Old Testament priest followed instructions from God on how to make reconciliation between the people and God. Old Testament priests received very specific and detailed instructions on performing their duties. Priests in the New Testament have instructions from the Lord that are exact and specific as well.

Let me make it clear I am not talking about priests in the Catholic church. When I talk about priests in the New Testament I am describing the priesthood of all believers before God. Scripture makes it clear every believer has direct access to God through the Lord Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

In each of the three days there are prophets, priests, and kings but the manifestation of each role changes with each day. We can avoid confusion by seeing each role as different and distinct in each of the three days.

15. Abel's Sacrifice

Hebrews 11:4, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh"

Genesis 4:4, "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"

Hebrews 9:22, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

Abel was not the first to offer God a sacrifice. His brother Cain gave God an offering made from the fruit of the ground.

After Cain gave an offering then Abel gave a sacrifice to God as well. However, Abel offered God a blood sacrifice from the firstlings of his flock.

Where did the idea of blood sacrifice originate? I believe the blood sacrifice originated from God and is first seen after Adam and Eve sinned. God himself sacrificed an animal so he could provide a covering for Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3:21)

Abel's offering is described in Hebrews 11:4, "(he) obtained witness that he was righteous". Abel's offering a blood sacrifice was a witness he had faith in the Lord and he was righteous. God accepted Abel's offering.

We are not told how God showed acceptance of Abel's offering but this was obvious to Cain and Abel. God made a difference between them. Perhaps it was like Elijah's sacrifice when fire fell from heaven and consumed Elijah's sacrifice proving Jehovah is God. (1 Kings 18). There are examples in the Bible where God demonstrates his acceptance of an offering by sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice.

Abel was enabled by God to understand blood sacrifice is the proper way to approach God. This faith is seeing: an ability to see God's order. People mistakenly think faith is getting from God, whether it be blessing, or healing, or material needs. However, real faith is not getting something from God. It is rather seeing what God already provided. By making a blood sacrifice offering Abel proved he saw God's order and this offering witnessed Abel's righteousness by faith. Those God chooses hear and see in the spirit.

Blood sacrifice did not make Abel righteous: it proved he was righteous by faith. He had eyes in his spirit to see and understand God. All born again Christians have spiritual eyes and ears. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17) God gives us spiritual eyes which we use to see spiritual things. This seeing is faith.

The Holy Spirit is careful in the text to point out the difference in the offerings brought by these two brothers.

Remember this is the first example of a principle running through the entire Bible. It is important to learn this principle in order to understand end times' prophecy.

The principle is this: these two brothers were of one house. They were of the house of Adam which was a household of faith in God. One brother was of the Spirit; the other brother was of the flesh. One was of faith; the other of unbelief. One lived according to God's order; the other lived on his own terms.

The brother of the flesh killed the spiritual brother. Nothing has changed throughout history. In every example of a pair within a household or within a certain category there is always one of the flesh and one of the Spirit. This applies whenever we see a pair in scripture that it is a picture contrasting between flesh and spirit, faith and unbelief, love and murder. Examples of this principle include Cain and Abel, Abraham and Lot, Sarah and Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Joseph and his brothers, Israel and Judah, Saul and David, and Martha and Mary. Understanding this principle helps us grasp the meaning of verses like Matthew 24:40, “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.”

This is speaking of one person who is of the flesh, and one who is of the Spirit; yet these two are both in one house, or in one category of people.

Understanding this principle helps to interpret the parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25. Ten virgins. Five wise, five foolish. Evenly divided into two even though these two elements belonged to one group of virgins. The wise go with the master when he returns but the foolish are shut out. What is the difference? The foolish brought their lamps. The wise brought their lamps and some oil with them. If you compare this with what we have covered concerning the different types of manna in scripture we can easily see that the lamp is the word of God and the oil is the Holy Spirit. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 3:6, “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” The foolish virgins had the letter that killeth, but the wise virgins had the word with the life-giving Spirit. There is a big difference between those who have bible doctrines, and then those who live, move and having their life saturated by the Word of God himself.

I realize this implies there will be people who take the name of Christ but are left behind at the catching away of the church. This is exactly what I am saying and I pray those who understand will cultivate a fear of God and be inspired to live an overcoming Christian life.

Abel represents the brother who lived in the Spirit, who had spiritual eyes to see God’s order. He offered a blood sacrifice, which looks forward in faith to the blood shed by the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. By faith Abel offered his sacrifice, and by doing so he submitted himself under God’s order.

16. Abraham’s Sacrifice

Hebrews 11:17-19, “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”

Genesis 22:18, “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

On one hand, Abraham was promised a son and not just any ordinary son. He was promised a son through whom the nations of the world would be blessed. On the other hand, the same God who makes this promise told Abraham to sacrifice this same son, his only begotten son Isaac.

The scene of Abraham and Isaac is a clear picture of the heavenly Father and his

only begotten Son Jesus.

Did Abraham his obedience was prophetic or pointed to something greater than himself and Isaac? The history of this incident was recorded, and eventually the Lord Jesus fulfilled the prophecy. Abraham and Isaac were a shadow of the real sacrifice which took place on Calvary.

Peter tells us these prophets realized these visions pointed to something which would be fulfilled later. The angels told Daniel to close the book because the visions he saw would be for the last days.

Abraham, in offering Isaac, took on the role of a priest. This was before Moses, Aaron, and the Levites who were later under the law.

Abraham was an example of a priest offering to God in simple obedience and faith. His blood offering pointed to the blood shed by the Lamb of God.

Abraham demonstrated he heard God's voice by obeying what God said and offering the blood sacrifice. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

When Abraham and Isaac were on the way to the mountain to make the sacrifice, Isaac asked the question, "Where is the sacrifice?" Abraham assured Isaac God would provide the offering himself. God did provide Abraham with a ram to sacrifice instead of his son but in a larger sense God provides himself as the sacrifice in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"

Abraham reasoned within himself God could raise Isaac from the dead. This shows how much faith Abraham had that he saw God's order in this manner. Abraham heard God's voice and he could see God's order.

Hebrews 11:9-10, "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

In this man's life we see glimpses of redemption, and we also see the consummation of God and man in the New Jerusalem.

Abraham was a prophet. His life prophesied God's plan for the ages. He was also a priest. Romans 4:20, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God".

17. Aaron The Priest

In Exodus 4:27 the Lord spoke to Aaron instructing him to meet his brother Moses. Together Moses and Aaron received instructions on God's plan for delivering Israel out of Egypt.

In each miracle God instructs Moses to tell Aaron to perform some action, like lifting up his rod, and the Lord performed miracles to convince Pharaoh. The more judgment Pharaoh witnessed the harder his heart became. This will be the same in the last days. The more judgment descends, the harder an unbeliever's heart becomes.

Exodus 19:6, "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

It was God's intention they all would be priests unto God. It eventually worked out only certain people in Israel were separated as priests. Let us not forget, however, God's original plan. The Lord desires a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

God gave instruction to Moses to take Aaron his brother and also Aaron's sons to be priests. (Exodus 28:1-2). Exodus 28 describes the robes, uniform, and all of the ornaments the priests wore "for glory and for beauty". Exodus 29 describes the consecration of the priests.

In Exodus 32 the people became impatient with Moses and approached Aaron. They wanted a plan of action. We see here temptation for those in ministry, especially religious leaders. Aaron fell into the temptation of prestige before the people. He cared what the people said or thought about him. This is also the fear of man.

Proverbs 29:25, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."

Prestige and fear of man is deadly for a minister. We see here the immediate manifestation of a corruption of the priest, the immediate result being idolatry, covetousness, and sexual immorality. When the church, which is the priest in day two, corrupts herself she sets up a false gospel and promotes idolatry with a spirit of covetousness and leads God's people into a party spirit resulting in promiscuity and sexual immorality. The aspect of the world system that is the distortion of the priest is the business world.

Churches and ministries go astray with idolatry because of impatience. It takes time to sit before God, to pray, to study the scripture, and to hear God's voice. God's work is never carried out hastily or with impatience. A man of God must learn to deny himself, refuse to make agreements with the world, and learn not to make a name for himself. This is very difficult and hard work. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29)

When Aaron fell into sin what was the first thing he did? He took up an offering. Ministries born out of the will of man put their own needs first and will make provision the focus of the work. We need to be careful to avoid this. Money does not buy ministry or the work of God. (Acts 8:20).

The Levites were assigned to Aaron and Aaron's sons for the purpose of maintaining the tabernacle of the congregation. The Levites camped around the tabernacle. They were exempt from the general census of Israel, but after they were assigned to Aaron they were counted in Numbers 3.

As an aside, counting people represents bringing people under authority and control. One of the methods government uses to control a population is through taking a census. This is one possible reason the Lord was angry with David when he performed a census. (1 Chronicles 21:1) David was a type of the Messiah, and the Messiah does not force people into submission through manipulation using numbers.

Another way people are brought into bondage and submission is through giving a person a title or a certificate. This brings a person into bondage to the world system. Mark this down. The enemy uses numbers and names to control people. This is why the number and name of man is so prominent in the last days because it is a way to manipulate and control a population. (Revelation 13:18)

Devils enlarge their influence through numbers. When Jesus cast the demons out

of the man in the Gadarenes he asked the devil his name. It said “Legion, for we are many.” (Mark 5:9) This is the principle of a world system the enemy attempted to construct at Babel. (Genesis 11:4) They make a name, independent of God, and magnify their name through numbers. (Notice they did not want to be scattered, but they wanted to gather together as one so their numbers would be magnified.)

When I think about this it makes a chill go down my spine when I consider how churches number people and send statistics on baptisms and memberships to authority over them. This process reeks of the worldly principle of control Jesus explicitly forbade the church from imitating. (Matthew 20:25-26) This is the principle of the world, and is how the enemy operates. I attended a church where a man would use a clicker during the service to count heads. It made me cringe, though at that time I did not understand why I was grieved by this.

Let’s also consider that “denominations” are also the world system. Paul makes it clear dividing the church using names is carnal in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. Why is it we are determined to elevate names, even to the point of dividing the church and separating ourselves from fellowship with other believers in Christ? Why is this so common, so ingrained in people? We should consider this is a part of the nature of the serpent engrafted into mankind during the fall in the Garden of Eden. We became one with the serpent.

It is the serpent who desires to make a name. It is the serpent who desires to separate over names of men and create denominations. It is the serpent who causes men to divide themselves over systematic theologies created by men.

Is it possible a man can love systematic theology and not love Christ Jesus the Lord? I have been earnest to make sure my doctrine is correct but I did not consider I could love systematic theology more Jesus himself. This is apparent in brothers who stoop to the level of arguing with others over systematic man-made theology.

Paul the apostle rebuked Peter but not over systematic theology. This reproof sprang out of a concern for the heart of the gospel of grace. We should ask ourselves if our arguments are over the gospel or over our favorite systematic theologies.

May the Lord give us a vision of unity in the body of Christ so we will deny ourselves, deny our names, and come together under the name of the Lord Jesus.

One may think an exhortation like this echoes the world which desires to unite under the banner of the antichrist. We who live in the last days are sensitive to new world orders, one world governments, and one world religions (as we should be).

In order to protect ourselves from this unity delusion we put on the armor of systematic theology. Is this the armor of God we need? I don’t think systems of theology will protect anyone from deception in these last days.

What will protect us and keep us is a love for the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10), a special love and burning passion for the Lord Jesus.

You may ask, however, what “Jesus” do I mean? (2 Corinthians 11:4) Do you mean the Jesus of the Mormons, the Jesus of the Jehovah Witnesses? What Jesus do you mean? There are so many false gospels, so many false spirits, so many false people proclaiming their own spirit guides as Jesus.

I can say with confidence the Lord knows those who are his. (2 Timothy 2:19) The Lord Jesus has sheep and those sheep hear his voice. (John 10:27) If we belong to

him, then we know it. We will not listen to the voice of strangers. (John 10:5) We are not kept in the faith by amassing piles of systematic theology, but we are kept by knowing the voice of the Lord Jesus. He speaks to us, and we know it is him. Those who know him will be strong and do exploits. (Daniel 11:32)

When Israel, out of unbelief, failed to enter the promised land there were certain Levites who rose up in rebellion against Aaron and Moses. This is called Korah's rebellion. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were the central ring leaders in this rebellion.

This account describes what I'm talking about in regard to men causing division in the church and wanting to exalt a name other than Jesus. People want a name to be exalted over their brethren.

This is covered in Numbers 16-17. In these chapters we see God brings judgment and destroys everyone who was a participant in this rebellion. They were swallowed up by a sudden sinkhole that closed up over them. Also, the 250 Levites holding censers the Lord killed. Their censers were saved and made into a memorial of warning for Israel.

In order to prevent further rebellion the Lord had them do a test using the staffs, or rods, of the leaders of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. God proved Aaron was his priest when Aaron's rod budded and bore fruit of almonds. This staff of Aaron that budded was included afterward within the Ark of the Covenant.

By this time there were the tables of law, the golden pot of manna, and finally Aaron's rod that budded, all included in the Ark of the Covenant.

One thing is clear from Aaron's history: God has a specific order in his administration.

Aaron was called as a priest for Israel. He and his sons were the first priests in Israel. Despite Aaron's failure in regard to the golden calf it did not change the fact Aaron was a priest for God. The calling of God is without repentance. God's calling upon a person does not change, even if that person fails.

Also, we see when people who are not chosen by God take upon themselves the ministry it brings judgment, death, and destruction upon God's people.

18. The Levites

The Levites assisted the priests with the setup and take down of the tabernacle of the congregation which contained on the holy place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

The Levites distinguished themselves from the other tribes during the incident with the golden calf. The people enticed Aaron into creating a golden calf, and fell into idolatry, covetousness, and sexual immorality. (1 Corinthians 10:6-11 has a detailed overview and application of this history.)

When Moses returned from the mountain he found Israel in rebellion. He was angry and threw down the stone tablets God wrote on and he broke them. Moses stood at the gate to the camp and called everyone who was on the Lord's side to join him. The tribe of Levi heard the call and rallied to Moses and to the Lord. During this time of backsliding and disobedience Levi separated themselves unto the Lord.

As a result, the Lord had Moses set apart the tribe of Levi. The Levites did not

have their own camp site, but camped around the tabernacle of meeting. They were given the job of setting up and taking down the tabernacle whenever Israel moved to a new location in the wilderness. They were the assistants to Aaron and Aaron's sons. The priest were in charge of supervising the Levites in their work with the tabernacle of meeting.

The lesson is that when we separate ourselves to the Lord he separates us for his work. When we abandon ourselves to the Lord he uses our lives to fulfill his purpose.

2 Timothy 2:20-21, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

The Levites did not receive a land inheritance in the promised land as the other tribes of Israel did. Their inheritance was the ministry of the tabernacle of meeting. They also received a tenth as a tithe from the tribes when they brought their offerings unto the Lord.

Levites demonstrate how important it is to have people helping in ministry. I notice in Paul's letters he included people working with him and those who helped him in the ministry. (2 Timothy 4:11)

Ministers need people to pray, support, and assist in the work.

In the New Testament every believer in Christ is a priest unto God. We all have direct access to God and the throne of his grace through the offering of the Lord Jesus Christ once for all. There is only one mediator between God and man and that is the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

The Levites were helpers in ministry and there are people in the body of Christ, as well, with gifts for helping and administration, encouragement and giving, and showing mercy. We need every part of the body of Christ doing each part their job so the entire body can be built up and strengthened. No part is less important than the others. We are all in this together to magnify and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

19. Hebrews Overview

Hebrews teaches Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. He is exalted over angels, Moses, and Jewish religious ordinances.

God spoke in time past by the prophets to the fathers but has now in these last days spoken to us by his Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Does this mean we no longer have prophets? Ephesians 4:11-12 makes it clear the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are gifts to the church for the building up of believers. Also Paul makes another list in 1 Corinthians 12:28, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

In Hebrews Melchizedek is mentioned. This man is an example, a similitude, of the priesthood of the Lord Jesus. This is mentioned in Psalm 110:4, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The writer in Hebrews builds on this to demonstrate the priesthood of the Lord Jesus is superior to the Jewish priesthood. God demonstrated the old priesthood was done away

when the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. (Matthew 27:51)

The Old Testament priesthood was a temporary system in place until the time God brought forth his son to be high priest forever. Jesus is not only high priest but the Lamb slain for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus fills every role priests foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

The Lord Jesus is a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. The superiority of this priesthood is demonstrated in that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Abraham gave him a tenth of the spoils of war. Melchizedek blessed Abraham and the lesser is blessed by the greater. Here we see the superiority of the Lord Jesus in every way. Some may believe Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate manifestation of the Lord Jesus. It is not necessary to believe this, because the writer of Hebrews makes it clear Melchizedek is a similitude of Jesus. Was Abraham's only begotten son Isaac Christ? No, but he was definitely a similitude of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. In the same way, Melchizedek also is a similitude and an example of the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus opened a door by his priesthood so we can now come directly to the throne of God's grace to receive grace and mercy to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16) There is no longer need for an earthly priesthood which offers sacrifices or stands between the believer and God the Father. We can now approach God's throne with confidence because of the blood of Jesus.

Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us. He is at the right hand of God the Father and lives forever to make intercession for us.

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Hebrews 7:25, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

It is by faith in the finished work of the Lord we enter God's rest. God's rest is a completed work in eternity. We enter by faith in what Jesus accomplished. As we stand on this sacred ground, we experience God's Spirit bringing these truths into reality in our daily lives. We truly experience a conscience cleansed through the blood of Jesus. We truly experience deliverance from our carnal self, deliverance from the power of sin, and victory over the world and the devil. We have victory over death itself. We can be and will be and are even now swallowed up in the life of the Lord Jesus and his resurrection.

Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

We enter by faith into God's finished work for us. We approach God by faith. This is the only way. We are saved, kept, and transformed from glory to glory by faith in Christ alone.

We lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us and keep looking unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Let's not be discouraged when we experience hardship and difficulties, but consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. (Hebrews 12:3)

Hebrews 13:13-15, "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips

giving thanks to his name.”

20. New Testament Priest

The work of priests is reconciliation between men and God. The entire religious system of sacrifices pointed to the Lamb of God.

Now the Jesus is risen, ascended to heaven, and seated at the right of God the Father. He lives forever making intercession for his people.

Until the Lord Jesus returns we are in day two of God’s three days. Day two is the day of the priest; it is the day of the church.

1 Peter 2:9, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

This scripture is for every Christian who reads, understands, and believes the Bible. We are priests unto God. We do not need a man functioning as a priest for us. We are all priests and demonstrate this by praising God, by prayer, and by proclaiming Jesus.

When Pentecost arrived in Acts the Holy Ghost fell upon the apostles and the disciples who prayed in an upper room. The church was born. Jesus told them to wait until they were endued with power from on high. They became witnesses for Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

A royal priesthood was born. Day two of God’s three days began. In this day we are priests proclaiming Jesus and interceding in prayer. Acts 6:4, “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

The church, in one sense, always existed. The remnant in Israel was the spiritual church and the remnant in the church is spiritual Israel. Israel, the church, and the kingdom are one. In the same way Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God so also Israel, church, and the kingdom are one. These three days are God expressed in different aspects. There is only one God, and there is only one people of God. There always were and will always be just one people of God. They were the remnant in Israel, they are the remnant in the church, and will be the remnant out of the nations in the kingdom. It is important to understand God is three in one, and believers are three in one as well. God is prophet, priest, and king. God dispenses himself; he does not divide time.

Understanding God gives a man understanding of time, space, and the universe. The heavens declare the glory of God.

Currently we are at the very end of day two. We are standing on the threshold, on the very cusp of day three. Our foot is halfway through the door into day three.

In day two we are given God’s word, the Lord Jesus, and we are given God’s Spirit. As we walk in the Lord and in the Spirit we enter the eternal realm of the finished three days. When we do this we see God’s kingdom in our lives. We cast out devils in the name of Jesus. We lay hands on the sick and they are healed. We speak God’s word and overcomers hear it. John 8:47, “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”

They walk in faith, in the Spirit, and experience victory over self, sin, the world, the devil, and death itself.

When we live like this in Jesus we build the church. We are stones fitted together

with other Christians and rise as a holy temple in the Lord.

Our job is to believe in Jesus and intercede in prayer. Without prayer there is no victory in proclaiming God's word. We enjoy the presence of Christ every day. The more we enjoy the Lord the less power the world has over us. The more we soak in his presence, the more the enemy cannot stand to be around us.

I said to my wife one day: "We usurp the powers and principalities of darkness! In the kingdom the air is cleansed of their presence, and the church reigns in their place. There is no place for the evil one and his fallen angels in the kingdom."

In day two we battle powers and principalities through prayer and intercession. We do not know all we accomplish in prayer but we know this battle in prayer is of utmost importance.

The church is built through prayer and proclamation of God's word. We are make disciples, give them God's word, and send them out to multiply as much as their faith can sustain them.

We build, encourage, and comfort the church. (1 Corinthians 14:3) We are gathering together with Jesus and in His name. Let us pray the Lord gives us a heart for him, a love for the church, and that we will be a part of building and not a part of tearing down. (Proverbs 14:1)

We are given the ministry of reconciliation. This is outlined in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Now we are New Testament priests carrying good news. This good news is God reconciled us to himself through Jesus. Reconciliation is a work God has done for us. God himself places us into Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption".

The wrath of God was poured on the Lord Jesus. God crushed him. God's wrath is satisfied by the death of Jesus. We are justified by the blood of Jesus. We are justified by his death, burial, and resurrection. It is through his work we are justified and made holy.

Anyone who works for their salvation does not understand the finished work of Jesus. If we think we can obey the law and earn salvation we have erred. We do not yet know or understand the finished work of Christ.

I've heard some believe Christ's work forgave their sins and now they obey Old Testament law. Paul addresses this clearly in the book of Galatians. Having begun in the Spirit are we now made perfect by the law? Paul said those who teach we should obey the law after salvation have fallen from grace. This is another false gospel and receives God's curse. They do not understand what Christ accomplished for them. We are not made holy or sanctified by observing Sabbath days or following religious rules. The remnant is not set apart by obedience to law or commandment. The remnant is set apart

by grace and God's election.

Colossians 2:16-17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

The message of reconciliation is side tracked by legalists, Pharisees, and religious hypocrites. There are false teachers preaching another gospel. They do not preach the gospel of grace.

We must wrap our arms tightly around the message of reconciliation and God's grace. We are living in the day of grace. God sends ambassadors to proclaim God reconciled the world to himself through the Lord Jesus.

If a man is in Christ he does not need anything else. We are given everything we need for life and godliness. 2 Peter 1:3, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue". Do not add to this message and do not take away from it. (Revelation 22:18-19)

People add and subtract from the good news of God's reconciliation through the Lord Jesus. People add systems, traditions, rules, guidelines, steps, and on and on. All we need is the simplicity of Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 11:3) We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. (Philippians 4:13)

The message of reconciliation is attacked in a lot of ways. One way is to try and lead people back into Judaism or into becoming "Hebrew" Christians. We do not need to study Judaism or Hebrew roots in order to understand God's message of reconciliation. We are ambassadors for Christ, not ambassadors for Judaism or religion. Jesus is a real person. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Another attack on the gospel is adding man-made systems like Alcoholics Anonymous and the Big Book. When a believer in Jesus sits down in a circle and confesses he is an addict or an alcoholic he is making an agreement with a lie. What does the Bible say? 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." We need to choose who we are going to serve: religion or Jesus.

When did everything pass away and become new? Right now, at this very moment, if a man will believe!

If we believe right now in Jesus who was crucified, who died, who was buried, and who rose again on the third day; if we believe, even right now, then we are a new creation in Christ. We no longer need to confess to be anything but a Christian! We can be confident the good work Jesus started in us he will carry it on to completion until the day he returns. (Philippians 1:6)

There is only one gospel. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for I know from experience it is the power of God unto salvation unto everyone who believes. (Romans 1:16)

Do not be seduced by another gospel! Galatians 1:8, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed".

21. The Finished Work of Christ

Reading the New Testament teaches us the finished work of Christ. The reason we call this “the finished work” is because it is complete. There is nothing else which needs to be done in order for man to receive forgiveness of sins and to be saved from self, sin, the world, the devil, the lake of fire and death. Nothing else needs to be done to complete this. We simply believe the testimony that Jesus Christ is God’s Son. Jesus is the Son of God. By believing in the name of Jesus we receive eternal life. John 17:3, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

Some start out well believing the simple good news. They believe on the name of Jesus, they call on the name of the Lord, and receive forgiveness of sins. Unfortunately people quit believing after that. After believing they turn to some kind of system. We are naturally prone to unbelief and it suits us to follow a program rather than walking by faith. We think the gospel is for children and we are smarter than Sunday School lessons. Human pride causes us to depart from the gospel of Jesus.

If we remain in the word we soon discover Christ has done so much! When Jesus died on the cross he said, “It is finished.” (John 19:30) This is testimony all that was required for salvation is accomplished. The Lord Jesus saves us from our sins, from ourselves, from the power of sin, from the world, from the devil, from death, and from the lake of fire which is the second death.

I will examine here each of these facets of the finished work of Christ.

Forgiveness Of Sins:

When Paul gave his conversion testimony he quoted the words the Lord Jesus spoke to him. Acts 26:18, “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Paul never forgot these words. He continued to repeat this message in his letters.

Ephesians 1:7, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace”

Colossians 1:14, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”

John also repeats this message in his letter. 1 John 2:12, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.”

We can rest assured the finished work of Christ redeems us and provides forgiveness of sins. Here is a list of scripture verses related to the forgiveness of sins: Psalm 103:3; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:38; Acts 26:18; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 1:14; Colossians 2:13; 1 John 2:12

Deliverance From Self:

We see the finished work of Christ provides forgiveness of sins. Now we turn our attention to another aspect of Christ’s work: deliverance from self.

In the Bible, “self” is also described as “carnal” man, the “old” man, or the “flesh”. This is basically the serpent grafted into man when Adam and Eve fell. It is the poison of the snake, running through the blood stream of every son and daughter of Adam and Eve.

When Jesus told his disciples to “deny yourself and take up your cross” this principle of denying self is in view. This refers to man’s self or serpent nature.

Self represents living life according to our own understanding. This is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The main characteristic of self is pride.

It is necessary to deny self to become an overcomer. A person cannot become one with Christ until they deny self. They might call on Jesus’ name, they might receive forgiveness of sins, but they cannot experience consistent moral victory without denying self. They live a frustrated Christian life and bear no fruit for God’s kingdom.

The necessity of denying self is stated by Jesus.

Matthew 10:38-39, “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”

Matthew 16:24-25, “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

Mark 8:34-35, “And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.”

Luke 9:23-24, “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”

When something is repeated like this it is fundamental and crucial to the Christian life. Once we understand the necessity of denying self how do we proceed in accomplishing this? We overcome self in the same manner we receive forgiveness of sins. We are delivered from self by faith in the finished work of Christ. We see this through Paul in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” These verses are succinct and carry a weight of truth to set us free from self.

I said previously the main characteristic of self is pride. Imagine self is a beast who beats on his chest like a gorilla and declares “I am”. This is a good picture of self. The more satanic version of this is when people say, “I am god”. This is satanic and carries the essence of the serpent.

We can scarcely comprehend how infected the human race is with the poison of the serpent. Our self, or serpent being, is an outpouring and manifestation of Satan. No wonder Jesus said, “Unless you deny yourself you cannot be my disciple”. It is literally impossible because Jesus is the opposite in nature from the serpent and fallen man. Philippians 2 outlines the character and quality of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:6-8, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Remember God revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush: what was his name? I Am That I Am. Paul therefore says in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with

Christ.” Can we see this? It is becoming one with Christ in crucifixion that deals the death blow to self. We no longer live for our self but for him who died for us and rose again.

God himself took us out of Adam and placed us into Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:30, “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption”. God himself placed us in Christ Jesus. It is nothing we have done. God did the work!

We are crucified with Christ. Our “I am” was crucified with Christ. The self was given a death blow on the cross. We are set free from self now. We were set free to deny self, take up the cross daily, and live in Christ Jesus. He lives his life to us now.

There is much wisdom here in respect to denying self. Remember Philippians 2 says he made himself of no reputation. Jesus did not do anything in his own name during his earthly ministry. He did everything in his Father’s name. It was only when he was approaching the cross Jesus taught his disciples to operate in the name of Jesus. We must also, as Jesus demonstrated, deny our name and reputation and take on the name of Jesus just as Jesus took on the Father’s name. We cannot make a name for self and take on the name of Christ at the same time. It is just impossible.

It was God the Father who made a name for Jesus. He spoke as a voice out of the cloud on the mount and said, “This is my beloved Son, hear him!” (Mark 9:7) God might make a name for us if it is in the interest of the gospel. He might do this for the sake of the gospel. But we must never, never, never seek a name for ourselves. We must deny self and take up the cross.

God took us out of Adam and put us in Christ. We are crucified with Christ. Each day this principle is at work in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He applies to us each day the finished work of Christ as we believe God’s word and abide in Jesus. If we do not abide in Jesus we will be cut off from him. We abide in him by faith every day, looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith. We proclaim him every day. I am crucified with Christ and I no longer live. Christ lives in me. My life is now in Christ. I am hidden with Christ in God.

The Holy Spirit gives the believer intuition in denying self daily. Many opportunities arise every single day for the believer to deny self. When these situations arise, the believer receives grace and power to deny self for the sake of Christ.

Worldly philosophy and psychology teach the opposite of the Bible on this subject. The world teaches people to put thought and energy into their self-image. The world teaches us to love self. The Lord Jesus always teaches us to deny self and carry the cross. Any philosophy or teaching outside Christ will emphasize love of self and self esteem. These teachings have the essence of the serpent, the father of pride, and the religion of self exaltation.

The path to overcoming self is to look away from self. Do not be bothered by past sin and failure or even your successes. Look away from self. Look unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith. Behold the Lamb of God. Consider him who endured. Ponder the Lord Jesus and allow our heart to fall in love with him more and more every day. He is all we need.

We must be disciplined to hate self, the serpent life, and to love Jesus with all of our strength. When we see the revelation of Jesus Christ in glory we immediately hate

self and take God's side and say Amen to his judgment that self is worthy of hellfire. We fall down on our face and worship the Lord Jesus and cry out, "You are worthy, Oh Lord, to receive all glory, all honor, and all the praise. Oh Lord, you are worthy and I exalt you. I love you Jesus, I love you Jesus, I love you Jesus!"

Deliverance From Sin:

Tied in and mixed completely with the self life is the power of sin. We have learned Jesus washes away all of our sins in his precious blood. (1 John 1:9)

Beyond sinful actions (sins) we also inherit a sin nature from Adam. This sin nature is represented as the power of sin. There is a power of sin abiding in the natural man waiting for an opportunity to spring out and bring death. A person who does not believe in Jesus is completely controlled and enslaved by the power of sin. Their lives are dictated by the power of sin.

Here is a list of scriptures that deal with sin: Genesis 4:7; John 1:29; John 16:8-9; Romans 3:9; Romans 5:12-13; Romans 5:20-21; Galatians 3:22; Hebrews 3:13; James 1:15; 1 John 1:8.

This is just a sample of scriptures that mention sin. Man inherited a sin nature from Adam and Eve. This sin nature brings about our eventual deaths. Also, this sin nature does not discriminate between those who are religious or not. Sin abides in every person who is born upon this earth. Every son or daughter of Adam and Eve inherit this sin nature. This power of sin is at work in our bodies and results in sickness, disease, and eventually death.

How do we overcome sin? Overcoming the power of sin is accomplished in the same manner as forgiveness of sins and deliverance from self. We overcome sin by reckoning ourselves dead with Christ in his death on the cross. I died with him. (Romans 6). When Jesus died on the cross I died with him and in him. When he died, he died to sin once and for all. As one stands on this truth the experience of deliverance from the power of sin will follow. Faith comes first. The result of faith is victory in Jesus.

1 John 5:4, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Sin shall not have dominion over you when you abide in the finished work of Christ. Romans 6:14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." When you choose to believe God's word and stand in the finished work of Christ you experience power to rise above the sin nature.

Overcoming The World:

The Lord has completed a finished work. We enter God's rest by faith in the finished work of Christ. We have covered scripture that points toward victory over sinful actions, self, sin nature, and now we want to look at overcoming the world.

What does it mean to overcome the world? We need to understand Jesus has already overcome the world. In Christ, by faith, we have overcome with him.

John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Why do Christians have tribulation in the world? Overcoming Christians certainly will face tribulations. This word means difficulty or hardship.

John 15:18-19, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated

you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

It is very important to remember and to understand as an overcoming Christian the entire world is against you. 1 John 5:19, “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” This is not a passive indifference or apathy. The world aggressively attempts to conform us into its mold. (Romans 12:2)

Sadly many Christians willingly expose themselves to the world and give that spirit ample opportunity to infect their souls.

Romans 13:14, “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

Every Christian must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, but do not be prideful and think we can outwit or beat the devil in an arm wrestle. Once we compromise, we have already lost.

How do we overcome the world? In the same way as we receive forgiveness of sins and deliverance from self and sin. We overcome by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus. Jesus said he has overcome the world and in Christ we too have already overcome the world.

1 John 5:4-5, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

Victory Over The Devil:

The devil is our enemy. The enemy is a liar, a thief, the wicked one, a murderer, the accuser of the brethren, Satan, devil, Lucifer, serpent, dragon, the beast, a roaring lion, prince of the power of air, ruler of the world system, and can appear as an angel of light.

When we stand in faith upon the sacred ground of the finished work of Christ Jesus, we obtain forgiveness of sin, deliverance from self and sin, we overcome the world, and here we see we have victory over the enemy.

Here is a list of scriptures pertaining to the enemy and our battle: John 12:31-32, Luke 10:18-19, Mark 16:17-18, 1 John 3:8, John 10:10, John 8:44, 1 John 4:4, Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 6:10-18, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

Ephesians 6 especially details we are in a spiritual warfare and we need the whole armor of God. We do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places.

We overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony (Revelation 12:10-11). Our testimony is the completed, finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We proclaim the Lord Jesus (Colossians 1:28), and ourselves as one with him in crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and that we are seated together with him in heavenly places. We are seated together with Christ (Ephesians 2:6), far above all principality and power of this dark world. We proclaim the victory of the Lamb of God. We announce everywhere we go the name of the Lord Jesus.

We overcome the enemy by living with, in, and under the name of Jesus; pleading the shed blood of Jesus; proclaiming the finished work of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; and taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. Amen.

Overcoming Death and Hell:

The Lord has given us life through his name. When the Lord Jesus completed his work he gave us life and life more abundantly. As a result, we are delivered from death and from the lake of fire, which is the second death.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Also, the promise given to the overcoming Christian is that we will not be hurt by the second death. This second death is the lake of fire.

Revelation 2:11, “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

Revelation 21:8, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

22. Distortion Of The Priest

In the last section we discussed overcoming the world. Here I want to think more on this as it relates to the role of the priest.

What is the world? The best definition I have found of the world is in 1 John 2:15-17, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

The three distinct parts of the world are: (1) the lust of the flesh, (2), the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life.

It is important for the overcoming Christian to memorize this and pray the Lord for discernment, wisdom, and understanding.

The world system in its external machinery consists of: (1) Government, (2) Business, and (3) Society.

The Christian cannot escape this outward machinery of the world system. Jesus prayed in John 17:15, “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

Christians are called as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Christians should be salt and light in all these areas and bring God’s kingdom into them.

However, it is easy for Christians to become entangled with this world system. Evil gives energy and heat to the machinery of government, business, and society. Evil is the gas in the engine. Satan is behind the wheel driving this wayward vehicle.

Christians are tempted in all areas of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Depending on where they work, however, they become more prone to certain temptations of the system.

I want to focus on the area of the world system which is a distortion of the priest.

The entire world system is a distorted reflection of God’s glory. I say it is distorted because the Bible clearly shows the world system hates God and God hates the world system. (James 4:4) Eventually God will destroy the world system. Everything in the world system is related to and influenced by Satan.

Ephesians 2:2, “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:”

Matthew 4:8-9, “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

At one time Satan was an angel cherub named Lucifer. Pride was found in him and he fell along with one third of the angelic hosts. These now comprise the principalities and powers of darkness described by Paul in Ephesians 6.

When Lucifer was an angel cherub he saw the glory of God and took this knowledge with him when he fell. This knowledge was used when he constructed the world system which holds men in slavery and bondage.

In Romans 13 Paul describes the worldly authority structures as being from God. Paul’s exhortation to submit to authority is for the express purpose of bringing the gospel to every single person possible. Paul warns Christians not to be rebellious against government authorities because at the present time we are servants in this world, demonstrating God’s grace and mercy to people in the world in the hope of bringing people to salvation. We are also a demonstration to those principalities and powers and a testimony of their forthcoming overthrow and doom. (Ephesians 3:10)

These worldly authority structures are Satan’s imitations of what he saw of God’s glory. The devil did not invent anything original. He copied what he saw and changed it so it would be used to enslave men rather than giving men freedom and liberty. Despite this God allows these structures because of the hardness of men’s hearts, just as he allowed the rise of King Saul when Israel demanded a king like the Gentile Nations. Government came into being in Genesis 9:5-6 when the Lord said that murderers would be executed by other men. Executing murderers is the responsibility of the government. However, if mankind were not murderers there would be no need for this system. These structures are a shadowy reflection of God’s order and what he permits to be in place to protect fallen man from destroying himself. These structures in some way reflect the external, outward show of God’s glory that Lucifer saw. Satan uses this system to suppress and destroy further the spirit in man, just as he also takes advantage of God’s law to accuse and condemn men. The world system is a fake reproduction of something that is real in eternity. The world system is ultimately against God himself because it is a counterfeit and a copy. This is the same truth when it comes to man-made religion and is true of that Wicked One, the anti-Christ, who will come and embody Satan.

The world system is an upside down and inside out reflection of the glory of God. This is why this current world system can sustain man’s outward, physical life but it suppresses and destroys man’s spiritual life. Satan’s emphasis is making sure man is preoccupied always with self by creating a system that forces him to constantly be looking out for himself. This system completely suppresses loving one’s neighbor and loving God.

At times men are able to push the system more towards God when the majority of the population are believers and have the wisdom of the scriptures. However, the more ignorant people become, the more controlling and oppressive the world system becomes. The power of the world system is directly held in check by the church of the Lord Jesus

Christ. As sin grows in strength in America we will see more and more direct confrontations between the outward church and the world system. When the church loses its power and spiritual authority then the world system gains strength and people suffer.

The business world is a distortion of the priest. Remember, we have (1) Government, (2) Business, and (3) Society as the machinery of the world system. Government is a distortion of the prophet. Business is a distortion of the priest. Society is a distortion of the king.

The priest parallels the church and day two of God's three days.

The business world can be generally dissected into three parts as well: (1) Executives, (2) HR, Legal, and Payroll, and (3) Employees.

The business world, like government, is seen as a whole structure unto itself.

The work of the priest is intercession and reconciliation.

The business world accomplishes a parallel task using the medium of money and numbers. They serve at the altar of money. They intercede with money. Employees submit to executives rather than executives being servants. This system is a shadowy reflection of God's glory as it relates to the priesthood.

To understand this we have examples from the Bible. There was a priest named Eli in Israel who had two sons, Hophni and Phineas, who were evil. They ate the fat of the offerings and committed sexual immorality with those they had authority over. (1 Samuel 2:12-17) This is a clear picture of what business executives are like in the world system.

The Christian in business, primarily Christians who are executives or business owners, are tempted by money. We covet what we see. This is the lust of the eyes. This is tied directly to business, money, idolatry, covetousness, and sexual immorality. These are the areas Christians in this area suffer the most.

Another good example of this is Aaron's sin with the golden calf. This is another example of the corruption of the priesthood and the results of this corruption. (Exodus 32; 1 Corinthians 10).

For the unbeliever, as a business executive, these traits dominate and run their lives.

This is a very difficult place for a Christian to maintain a consistent walk of victory in the Lord Jesus, but it can be done. Nothing is impossible with God.

23. Pentecost

The early church understood the world system in a way the church today has completely forgotten. Instead of using faith as a magical power to conjure wealth the early church simply gave to one another as each had need. People did not consider their possessions as their own, but freely gave to one another as each person had need. I believe this is a glimpse into what the entire world will be like during the kingdom age in the third day.

As a new priesthood the priority of the church in the book of Acts was prayer intercession and the ministry of the word. As Jesus instructed them, they gathered together in the upper room and waited to be endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49)

A result of this focus on prayer was they were all in one accord and in one mind. They were living with one another in unity. (Acts 2:1)

Unity in the church is important for God's purpose to be accomplished. Some people talk of unity and some understand the importance of unity. However, any move toward unity is hindered by those who inject a false gospel. Today the church is splintered into many different camps according to doctrines, distinctives, and division according to the names of men who were leaders in past revivals and also men who were theologians with followings. There are too many of these divisions and denominations to even list.

Divisions have in common two characteristics I have been able to identify: (1) Names, and (2) dead letter exalted over the life giving Spirit.

Names:

As I have mentioned before, one of the characteristics of a spiritual Christian is that he denies his own self. A person's name is a symbol of who they are and their reputation. People who seek to make a name for themselves are not denying themselves. I doubt most of the names that head up denominations today – the person behind the name – probably did not seek a name for themselves. But this is what happens. Men are worshipers of self, so they will take the name of a man to identify themselves.

Jesus made this crystal clear in John 5:43, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

There is no doubt in my mind who Jesus was referring to.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-12, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (8-12) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

The reason why people receive this man, the reason why they worship him and accept him is because he comes in his own name! He glorifies and magnifies self! Men are worshipers of self, and they accept and worship a messiah of self.

This is tied in with the idea of making a name for one's self. Very subtle, very deadly indeed is the enemy of our soul. He has us worshiping him by adoring our own self, because this is his principle, his law, his essence. He is the father of lies, and those who refuse to die to self will be deceived. God himself sends strong delusion that every person who has not received a love of the truth will be carried away. Pause a moment and think about that: if God deceives you, there is no hope. There will be no middle ground, no fence straddling, no way we can stand by passively. We must get all the way on the Lord's side, like the Levites did when Moses called out to all those who would stand with him at the gate of the camp.

We cannot allow ourselves to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of

darkness, but we must reprove them. (Ephesians 5:11) We must come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing. (2 Corinthians 6:17) We can no longer be yoked together with unbelievers and with religious hypocrites who name the name of Jesus but live like the world. (2 Corinthians 6:14) We must find fellowship with the true remnant, with overcomers in Christ Jesus who stand completely on the sacred ground of the finished work of Christ. By their fruits you shall know them.

The true remnant is not teaching us about observing the Sabbath. The true remnant is not preaching obedience to God's laws. The true remnant is teaching believers to stand on the finished work of Christ. These other groups proclaiming obedience to the law are modern day Pharisees and we need to stay far away from them. When the blind lead the blind they both will fall into a ditch.

Men are worshipers of self so they will take the name of a man to identify themselves. Oh, how terrible this is.

1 Corinthians 3:3-4, "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

This carnality is exposed here by the apostle Paul. How is it possible churches cannot understand this since we have this carnality exposed right here in the Bible? People do it anyways. I cringe whenever I hear someone identify themselves by a man's name or by the name of a denomination. Why not just be a Christian? Why do we need to add something that causes division in the body of Christ? Can we not see how grievous this is?

It is carnal, of the flesh, and according to the world system, and is also in line with the principle of Satan which will be revealed in that Wicked One.

When ever people seek a name for themselves they are following the same spirit that inspired Nimrod and that crowd to build the tower of Babel. Making a name for ourselves is the world system.

Genesis 11:4, "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

It does not take a lot of discernment to hear the echo of Satan in the words of these people. The purpose of making names is to bring people underneath us, to subject others underneath. We give ourselves names to exalt and magnify ourselves. With a name we have power. In our own name men accomplish much independently and separate from God. This is Satan's goal. To incite man to be independent from God, to exalt himself in government, business, and in society. But no one is ever told that this name we give ourselves brings us into unspeakable suffering, sorrow and death.

Remember Israel wanted a king. They wanted someone with a name to lead them. But Samuel told them what would happen when they adopted this system. Their children would become slaves to this system. That king would bring them into bondage and they would be slaves of this king. King Saul is a foreshadowing of the antichrist.

This is the price we pay for making a name for ourselves – we become slaves to sin, self, and ultimately Satan.

This is the tragedy of church denominations. Every man wants to make a name for himself. By making a name for ourselves we separate ourselves from the body of the

Lord Jesus. We separate ourselves from the head of the church. Why do men want to be servants of men? Because it is easier to serve a man than to serve God? In their hearts they themselves lust for position, power, and prestige. They follow because they desire to be the leader. They want their name to be exalted over their brethren.

Ah, what a tragedy we have in the church. No wonder revivals do not last. Every move of God lasts as long as it takes for men to begin asserting themselves, taking control, giving it a name and systematizing it all into an organization and systematic theology. Once the move of God is given a name men are made in charge of it and the system begins to be put in place. With every brick put into our towers, we exalt ourselves against the God of heaven.

Dead Letter:

The second reason for division in the church is that men exalt the letter of their doctrines over God's word and the present reality of Christ. It is hard to believe but there are some people who love their doctrines more than they love Christ or their brothers and sisters in Christ. If they find a fellow Christian who does not go along with their doctrine they will part company with them.

It is true we need to have good, solid, biblical doctrine. Paul told Timothy that in the last days men would depart from the faith giving heed to doctrines of demons.

The other extreme to this is that Christians exalt doctrine to the point where it becomes "the letter that killeth..." They are so right they are dead right.

2 Corinthians 3:6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

The apostles in the early church walked in the authority of the kingdom. Why? Because they did not make a name for themselves. They denied their own self, took up the cross, and followed Jesus in laying down their lives. They had only one doctrine, and that was the gospel of the Lord Jesus. They were united in one heart, one mind, and one spirit. Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

As they prayed in the upper room the Holy Ghost fell on them and they were baptized in the Holy Ghost. People saw what looked like tongues of fire on people. As a result of this power from on high these men walked in kingdom authority. They were given to eat of the hidden manna. (Revelation 2:17)

In Acts 3 Peter and John proclaimed healing in the name of Jesus for the crippled man at the gate Beautiful. The man was healed immediately and a crowd gathered and they stared at Peter and John. But listen to what Peter said to them:

Acts 3:12, 16 "Ye men of Israel, why marvel at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man walk? (16) And his name (Jesus) through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

Notice Peter denied himself and proclaimed the name of the Lord Jesus. This is what the church needs to do. Deny self! Proclaim Jesus! The Holy Spirit must lead us once again. When I say this, I do not mean a pastor stops teaching God's word and surrenders a church service to pandemonium. What I mean is we must deny ourselves,

and not seek to make a name for ourselves. We must approach the word of God with great humility and depend upon the Holy Spirit to speak through us for the building, exhortation, and the comfort of the church.

24. Intercession

The purpose of a priest is to be an agent of reconciliation between God and men. We no longer have a religious system of priests like in the Old Testament because all of these things were only a similitude pointing forward to the Lord Jesus. Now the Lord was raised from the dead on the third day and he is seated at the right hand of God the Father. The Lord Jesus is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by him because he ever lives to make intercession for us. (Hebrews 7:25)

As Christians we are one with Christ and are given the ministry of reconciliation. Part of this ministry is to proclaim the good news that Jesus has completed a work providing forgiveness of sins and deliverance from self, sin, the world, the devil, death and the lake of fire.

Another aspect of this ministry is the work of prayer and intercession. Acts 6:4, “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Paul exhorts in Ephesians 6:18, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”. He also wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray without ceasing”. The Lord Jesus spoke a parable about persistent prayer in Luke 18:1, “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint”.

One great example of intercessory prayer was the prophet Daniel in Daniel chapter 9. The prophet understood by books from Jeremiah that the Jewish people would be exiled from Jerusalem for seventy years. He realized this time had passed and so he turned to God in prayer and intercession for his people. His prayer is a good example of humility, repentance, confession, and intercession. Daniel begins his prayer in Daniel 9:4, “O Lord, the great and dreadful God...”

Daniel had a grasp on the fear of God in his life. He knew God in reality and in first hand experience. For prayer to really be effective we must know God first hand. When we do know God firsthand it instills a fear of God because he is a real person.

Think of reality like a bowl filled to the rim with water. The presence of God is like pushing an outside object, like a tennis ball, into that bowl until the water is overflowing. This is what the presence of God feels like. It feels like the fabric of reality is pushed around to make room for someone more real than reality. The effect of this upon the mind, spirit, and body is recognizable. I do not mean a person loses control and has a fit. 1 Corinthians 14:32-33, “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” I do mean, however, the presence of God is recognizable and is tangible and has a definite effect upon the conscious mind and upon physical reality. Often when Daniel received visions and revelations from the Lord he would be weak and sick for days afterward.

His presence shatters the illusion of this current reality we live in. Many times in

the book of Daniel there are descriptions of how the revelation of God caused Daniel to faint, pass out, fall on his face, and to feel weak or sick for days afterward. Our physical bodies cannot bear to be in the manifest presence of the Lord without losing strength. The presence of the Lord is powerful and causes men to run away in fear. The presence of God comes to us out of eternity, outside of time and space, and his presence changes us forever.

We should be cautious when we see supernatural phenomena in crowds of people falling out “under the power”. We should wonder if these men are getting back on their feet with a revelation from God in the order and magnitude of what Daniel the prophet had? We should be careful not to encourage these supernatural manifestations, because the enemy injects himself and deceives in this kind of situation. Does this manifestation produce a fear of God where a person prays, “O Lord the great and dreadful God”?

Daniel prayed to the great and dreadful God. He confessed his sins and the sins of his people. He acknowledged God’s judgments are righteous and true. He prayed for God to show mercy for the sake of his own name. Daniel realized the basis of prayer is the very person of God himself. We do not pray according to our own righteousness for all of our righteousness is as filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6). We pray according to the righteousness of God himself, and we plead with God according to his own name. A man who has been in God’s presence will understand these things. He does not need to be taught to pray by anyone. The Lord himself teaches us how to pray.

In Luke chapter 11 the disciples of Jesus asked him to teach them how to pray.

Luke 11:2-4, “And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”

This is a template prayer disciples can model all their prayers after.

The Lord’s prayer is in John chapter 17. I encourage everyone to read over the prayer of Jesus. One thing I notice is how Jesus mentions several times the Father’s name. Jesus prayed and lived and worked in the Father’s name. We now live and pray in the name of Jesus, but as Jesus taught us and left us an example we pray unto our heavenly Father. Since Jesus rose from the dead God is now our Father as well as the father of Jesus. We are now brothers with Jesus. Jesus was once the only begotten Son. Now he is the firstborn among many sons of God. We are brothers with the Lord Jesus.

Hebrews 2:17, “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.”

Hebrews 2:12, “Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.”

Hebrews 2:11, “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren”

Another aspect of the prayer the Lord taught his disciples is in regard to forgiveness. We are encouraged to pray and ask Father God to forgive our sins. In the very next breath we see God’s forgiveness for us has one contingency. We must also forgive every person who has sinned against us. Every person who is indebted to us we must set free. We are not allowed to hold anyone their debts against them. If we do not

forgive the debts others have to us the Lord does not forgive us the debt we have to him.

The truth is anyone who has really seen the Lord Jesus would not want to hold other people in bondage. The revelation of Jesus sets us free and we desire to set others free as well. When I hear of a Christian who holds bitterness or grudges against someone else it causes me to doubt they have encountered the Lord.

As a Christian, I desire to see others set free from sin, bondage, and the burdens this world system places upon us. How could I ever harden my heart towards someone else and refuse to forgive? Because the deceitfulness of sin can harden the heart. (Hebrews 3:13) We need to constantly be alert to the true condition of our heart before the Lord. It does not take very much for someone to harden their hearts.

Let's make sure there is no bitterness, hatred, or malice in our hearts. Ephesians 4:31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

If we have unforgiveness toward anyone we will not be able to pray in the Holy Ghost. Without the power of the Holy Ghost in our prayers we are just wasting our breath. If we regard iniquity in our heart the Lord will not hear us. (Psalm 66:18)

One of the most fundamental aspects, therefore, in order to intercede, is that we first of all forgive everyone. Don't wait for people to ask you to forgive them. Go ahead and tell God you forgive them. Proclaim forgiveness for every offender every time you pray. Sometimes when I pray I ask God to forgive people I do not know about who might be sin against me. It is possible there might be someone out there who has slandered me or talked evil things against me. I go ahead and ask God to forgive them.

We need to guard our heart against bitterness. It is easy to live according to the knowledge of good and evil. This is the fruit Adam and Eve ate that brought death upon us all. Let's instead choose life and choose to bless those who curse us, and to do good to those who would spitefully use us. Let's live according to the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life. Proverbs 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."

Paul left us an example of intercessory prayer as well. Often in his letters to the churches he would give a brief outline of his intercessory prayers for the church. It is important we learn these prayers so we may adopt the attitude of Christ toward the church. We need to learn to go beyond praying for our own needs and begin to pray for the church. This will change us so we are not focused on ourselves but our heart and mind are focused on the needs of others. In this way we can cultivate an attitude of being a servant. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:5) We can begin the process of putting on the new man (Ephesians 4:24) and taking on the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16) through prayer and intercession for the church (Ephesians 6:18).

There is a place for praying for the lost. Jesus asked his disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out laborers into the harvest field. (Matthew 9:37-38) These laborers are born out of the church. Therefore by praying for the church we can spiritually give birth to those who will go forth and evangelize in their family and workplace. This is all a very supernatural process which takes places in a very natural way. As the church is filled with life and revival each member will also overflow with the

life of Christ and this is felt in the work place and in peoples' homes. This is true evangelism when the church is in revival.

Ephesians 1:15-19 provides us with points we can incorporate into prayer. It is a good idea, I think, to memorize this section as to bring it into our prayers automatically. The points I see here are as follows:

- (1) Giving thanks. (verse 16)
- (2) Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus (verse 17)
- (3) Eyes of understanding enlightened (verse 18)
- (4) Know what is the hope of his calling (verse 18)
- (5) Riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints (verse 18)
- (6) Exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe (verse 19)

These are six points I see in Paul's prayer. There may be others the Lord can reveal to us as we pray these points for the church. I think we can actually use these points to pray for anyone, even those who do not know Christ. We can pray God will give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We can ask the Lord to show them what is the hope of his calling, his inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of his power toward those who believe.

A very important point I think we need to always remember is to give thanks for the people we are praying for. Giving thanks for people will soften our hearts towards them and creates an opening for God's grace to work through us to touch that person. We are saved by God's grace. Some people may never feel or perceive this grace unless it is extended through us in our prayers for them, which will naturally also affect our attitudes, our words, and our spirit towards them. Let us give thanks especially for those people who irritate us. Ephesians 5:20, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here are scripture portions that contain more examples of the apostle Paul's prayers for the church: Ephesians 3:14-20; Philippians 1:8-11; Colossians 1:9-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

We could study each of these for a lifetime and still see more truth to incorporate into our prayers. We should become completely devoted to this work of interceding and praying for the church. This is the work the Lord called us to. Above and beyond anything else we need to learn to pray and intercede daily for ourselves but more importantly for the saints, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

25. Introduction To The King

God is three in one. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is prophet, priest, and king. God is Israel, church, and kingdom. This is the vision the Lord gave me on August 4 and August 8, 2014.

Perhaps you have not thought of the bible, salvation, eternity, Jesus, or the church in the terms I use to describe them. That is OK! The last thing I want to do is create a new doctrine or a new teaching. My only desire in writing this book is to obey the Lord's instructions he gave me.

In the time we are living in right now God's people need to hear God's voice and not the voice of a man. Jesus said his sheep hear his voice and follow him. We must

learn we cannot follow men, no matter how godly or sincere those men are. Time past God has been patient with the church in setting up men as idols, but we are now entering a time of great deception culminating in men worshiping a man who will hypnotize the whole world. This antichrist spirit will take advantage of Christian church systems that exalt the names of men. What we have seen so far with charlatans is nothing compared to what is coming toward us. It is time to hide ourselves in the cleft of the rock. It is time we get shut in with God and learn to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. Only those who have a very special love relationship with Jesus will survive spiritually in the years in front of us leading up to the final organization of the antichrist system.

Jesus is returning as a thief in the night to receive the bride unto himself. After the world no longer has salt or light it will be plunged into the darkest period of mankind's history on this earth. As overcomers, however, we are looking past that brief seven year period. We are looking toward the coming of God's kingdom on this earth. We are eagerly awaiting and looking for the third day to begin.

26. God Is Three In One

To understand the content of this book we must grapple with the fact God is three in one. Many people know this somewhere in the back of their mind. It is something we might tend to ignore because there are so many different ideas and arguments out there on the nature of God. I'm not trying to prove anything here. I trust if someone has read this far God is dealing with them and nothing else I could say would prove or disprove God is three in one.

God's character provides the basis of creation itself. God is three in one. God is in the process of revealing himself to the entire universe in three days, and those three days are Israel, church, and the kingdom.

The three days is how the universe is seen from the perspective of eternity. Men can only see creation from the viewpoint of time and space, which is represented by the seven day week.

I mentioned the Ark of the Covenant and the contents of that Ark. Right before our eyes God reveals to us he is three in one in the Ark of the Covenant. He has revealed the prophet, the priest, and the king. He revealed himself in the Ark as Israel, church, and the kingdom.

Hebrews 9:4, "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant".

27. The Day Of The Lord

The day of the Lord is so huge it could fill an entire book all on its own. Here I just want to touch on a few thoughts regarding the day of the Lord as it pertains to the third day.

There are so many opinions people have regarding the day of the Lord I think it would be helpful to only focus on facts we can clearly establish with a straight forward reading of scripture.

The day of the Lord is mentioned and prophesied about in the Old and New

Testament.

The day of the Lord has much to do with God's wrath and judgment.

The day of the Lord is something the righteous are looking forward to with great hope and expectation.

I will examine a few scriptures.

Joel 1:15, "Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come."

Joel 2:1-2, 10-11, 31, "(1) Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; (2) A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. (10) The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: (11) And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? (31) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

Joel 3:15-16, "The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel."

It seems these prophecies in Joel have dual or even triple fulfillment. One fulfillment took place during the time Joel lived in. There was a day of the Lord that was judgment that came upon Israel and Judah then. They were destroyed and carried away by the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

In one sense this was the day of the Lord's judgment at that time for Israel. However, we quickly see Joel is also seeing a much bigger picture and meaning in this prophecy. Joel is seeing something in the heavens that Jesus also describes as being in the future, and also there is a description of the day of the Lord from John when he sees the vision of the revelation of Jesus Christ. We need to keep in mind with prophecy there can be dual fulfillment.

The darkness and gloominess in these prophecies definitely points towards God's judgment on the unbelieving world but also I see here a dual judgment on the unbelieving, sleeping church in the last days. Remember the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. Five were wise, five were foolish. Now let's turn our attention to some scripture in the New Testament that speaks of the day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

Paul's description of the day of the Lord puts it in terms of a thief coming in the night. The Lord himself describes his return as a thief in the night. However the return of the Lord in other scriptures speak of a day of the Lord when every eye shall behold him

and people will be terrified.

I think this can be understood easily with what is called the rapture of the church. There will be an event, at some point, where Jesus will return and his people will be snatched up to meet him in the clouds.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

This describes Jesus returning for his people. This will be an invisible return of the Lord that is unseen by unbelievers. This is why it is described as a thief in the night. It is an unseen event to the world, like a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

There is a lot of activity associated with the day of the Lord. Men try their best to organize these events into a flow chart for easy understanding and explanation. I don't think there is an easy way to put all the events connected with the day of the Lord in a definitive chronological order. I'm skeptical of those who are dogmatic on these points.

The best I've been able to do is at least identify the chief characteristics surrounding the day of the Lord.

Jesus in Matthew 24 expands more on the time period preceding to and leading up to the day of the Lord. The way Jesus describes it also line up with the descriptions in the Old Testament.

We know this will be a time of terrible judgments falling upon sinful mankind. The world has never yet seen the horrors that will take place during this time.

John saw this and he recorded it for us in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation describes through spiritual visions the events that will take place upon the earth during the seven years of tribulation. I believe by the end of Chapter 3 of Revelation the overcoming church this side of the seven years, the bride of Christ, is taken out in the rapture. However, I believe there will still be many people on earth who claim the name of Christ, who consider themselves Christians, but who are left behind. Remember the wise virgins and foolish virgins in Matthew 25. I have explained this elsewhere but it bears repeating again.

28. Remnant Overcomers

When I saw the vision from the Lord there was a remnant in Israel, a remnant in the church, and also a remnant among the nations during the kingdom age. All of these comprise one body of believers from beginning to end.

When considering the remnant we need to think in terms of one house with two brothers, or two sisters, or a paired element of some sort. Throughout the bible when two people are spoken of in one context it is usually to contrast the flesh and the spirit, or

faith and unbelief.

Examples include: Cain and Abel, Abraham and Lot, Sarah and Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Israel and Judah, Saul and David, Martha and Mary, five wise and five foolish virgins, and also one taken and one left. In each example, the pair belongs to the same group or category, but one is of the flesh and one is of the spirit.

When we see this pattern in scripture it becomes even more pressing upon us to make our calling and election sure. Do we call ourselves a Christian but our lives are identical to unbelievers? What exactly is there in one's life that makes a man different from an unbeliever? One may say, "My faith in Jesus." But how is this faith seen in our life? Where is the evidence in our daily life that we are a Christian? Remember James' admonition: "Even the demons believe in God, and shudder." (James 2:19)

We must continue to grow in the grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We cannot rest on yesterday's confession, yesterday's faith, yesterday's prayers. Today is the day of salvation. We must believe in Jesus today.

Believing in the Lord Jesus is not a one time deal. Did you pray at an altar one time? Good. Did you get baptized once upon a time? Good. But, let me ask you, are you believing in Jesus today? Is there evidence in your life today that you believe in Jesus?

The Lord is risen, He is alive. He is here right now. Let us turn to him now, forgetting those things which are behind us, and looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith.

There is a clear pattern in scripture of a brother in the flesh, and a brother in the spirit. With this in mind, consider the following scripture:

Matthew 24:40, "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

I do not believe for a second this verse and others like it describing this sudden catching away of people is contrasting believers and unbelievers. When we see a pair, it is a pair that belong to the same house. One is of the flesh, the other is of the spirit. The brother who is in the flesh is left behind, and the brother who is in the spirit is taken.

I realize how scary this sounds! I realize people will have a hard time accepting this but I know it is the truth of scripture.

Why does Jesus exhort believers to pray they may be found worthy to escape? (Luke 21:36) Why are we exhorted over and over to watch and pray, to be sober and be watching? Brothers and sisters, we need to seriously examine ourselves in light of scripture.

I am not saying Christians left behind to endure the tribulation are lost or unsaved. The Bible makes it clear many Christians become overcomers during the tribulation and they pay for it with their heads.

We do not want to be left behind. Let us determine in our heart right now we will believe all of the finished work of Christ, we will become one with Christ Jesus in his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. Let us determine by God's grace we will live an overcoming life in the Lord. Let us pray now God delivers us from every idol, every stronghold, every area of unbelief in our life. Let us pray now God will fill us again and again with a new baptism in the Holy Ghost. Let us pray to God we can hear God's voice calling our name.

It does not matter if people say "Lord, Lord"! All that matters is this: Does the

Lord know our name? The devils said they knew Jesus and Paul but who are you? I plead with Christians to get down on our knees and ask God to revive us once again.

May the Lord be gracious to us, and shine his light upon us, that we may see the day in which we are living, not that we would be fearful, but that we would take hold upon the hem of his garment and not let go until we hear his voice!

There has always been a remnant of true believers who were overcomers in their generation. There are many promises from the Lord to those who are overcomers in Revelation chapters 2-3. We will eat of the tree of life, will not be hurt by the second death, we will be given to eat of the hidden manna, we will have a white stone with a new name in it, we will be clothed in white raiment, our names will be in the book of life, Jesus will confess our names before the Father and his angels, we will be made a pillar in the temple of God, we will have the name of God, the new Jerusalem, and Jesus written on us, and we will reign and rule over the nations with Jesus. I think it is well worth our time to make sure before God we are overcomers.

Even though the Lord has made these wonderful promises to the overcomers, only a minority of people in Israel, church, and the nations will make it into this group. What does it take to get in?

It takes believing in Jesus. It takes staking our entire life, name, reputation, and all that we have on the name of Jesus.

I realize more and more every day it is all to the glory of God and his grace that anyone is saved. I am thankful a brother recently pointed this out to me. Our lives outside of Christ are completely worthless, sin-ridden, caked with iniquity, and totally depraved.

The only hope we have is in the Lord Jesus. Even among those who take Christ's name, only a small minority comprise the remnant.

I believe it is God's purpose in this small group of believers to achieve what the entire household of faith was supposed to achieve. God has chosen a small group in the house of faith. This is so no flesh can glory in God's presence. God chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, he chooses the weak things to confound the strong, that no man can boast before the Lord. It is because of God alone we are now in Christ Jesus who has become for us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification. (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

God used Gideon and a remnant to bring victory.

God used the boy David with a slingshot to bring down giant Goliath.

God used a cross and the death of his dear Son to bring salvation and eternal life to everyone who believes.

We preach Christ crucified. This is foolishness to unbelievers, something they cannot comprehend. The god of this present age, Satan, has blinded their minds against the gospel. 2 Corinthians 4:4, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

The gospel remnant has always been in existence. From the time of Abel and on down there has been a righteous remnant of believers. There was a remnant of true believers in Israel, there is a remnant of true believers in the church that comprise the bride of Christ, and there will also be a remnant taken out of the nations in the kingdom.

29. Hidden Manna

On August 8, 2014 the Lord spoke to me and said, “Hidden manna”. I don’t know if I ever heard those words before. I’m sure I must have because I’ve read the Bible before, but those words never stuck out in my conscious mind to my knowledge. The Lord talked about me and said, “He will receive this but he does not understand it.” I felt the Lord impart himself into my spirit. I sat up on the side of the bed and the Lord said to me, “Hidden manna.” I understood he meant for me to study the Bible and “hidden manna” was a key to understanding everything he imparted to me on August 4 and August 8, 2014.

Even without any understanding I walked across the hallway, picked up my diary and began to write. Later I realized what I wrote down was my spirit prophesying what God put into my spirit. Here are the words that I wrote down:

“Time is no more. Samuel’s words never fell to the ground. Prophet authority word life and death, power in tongue. He receives, he does not know what he receives. Prophet word authority like government, power to execute a sentence. Power of life and death. Authority life and death. Jesus power to lay down his life and take it up again. The clock strikes midnight. Time is running out. He that is of God hears God’s words.”

Those are the words as I wrote them down in my notebook on the morning of August 8, 2014. The anointing of the Lord also fell upon my wife and she had a prophetic dream. I have included a description of her dream in the appendix of this book.

Later in the day the Lord gave me instructions to write down everything I received from him. That entire week and the following week I received multiple words of knowledge, words of wisdom, and revelations from the Lord.

The only time in my life I ever experienced anything close to this was when I was first baptized in the Holy Ghost in 1989.

I went to the Bible and studied “hidden manna” and also the word “manna”. In this section on the hidden manna I want to share what I learned and what I believe the Lord shared with me about the hidden manna.

Revelation 2:17, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”

When a Christian walks consistently by faith in the completed, finished work of Christ he experiences a growing authority in his every day life situations.

To get a better understanding of authority I was shown (as much as I could take) of who God is. There are foundational thoughts that needed to be in place before I could appreciate the hidden manna in Revelation 2:17.

To understand hidden manna I needed an overview of God in time and space. This was given to me as God three in one: Father, Son, Holy Spirit: prophet, priest, king: Israel, church, kingdom. The Lord put all of this into my spirit in a moment but it took days and weeks to wrap my head around this. Even now, as I write this, I know I still do not have a complete understanding of what is in my spirit. That is another confirmation to me all of this is from God and not from myself, because I could never make this stuff up. I don’t think like this. My brain does not function like this. I spent years

troubleshooting computers and working in the technology field. I don't walk around thinking about God three in one. This all came as divine revelation to me.

There is a difference between man's view of time and God's view from eternity. I caught a glimpse of this and realized the entire universe reflects the glory of who God is. It is mathematical in precision. The heavens declare the glory of God.

Time and space is understood by man in the form of seven days. One week is seven days. Man is given six days, and the Lord has the seventh day, which is also the third day from the perspective of eternity. This is the kingdom age and the Lord's day.

From my limited understanding I see these six days are six thousand years, which means we are now six thousands years out from Adam and Eve. Six days are given to men.

From the view out of eternity there are only three days. God is three in one. There is one eternity in three days and those three days are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three days parallel Israel, church, and the kingdom. In each of the three days each component is at the same time present in the others. There is one part that is in the forefront while the other two support, and each one takes a turn in time and space.

Within Israel there was and is a remnant of the faith of Abraham, a people upon whom rests the spirit of prophecy. They believe in Jesus. Jesus said Abraham saw his day and rejoiced. This was the church within Israel, the true believing remnant within the larger whole. Also, this represents the brother who is of the Spirit.

There have always been the Gentile nations which are grafted in. Ruth is an example of this grafting into the very lineage of King David and King Jesus. The nations will receive special attention during the kingdom age. The Lord will reveal true spiritual authority to the earth during that day.

Also, within organized Christianity there exists a remnant of true believers. These are overcomers, the bride of Christ, of whom Jesus will receive unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The three days of God are Israel, church, and the kingdom.

At the current time in history we are at the very threshold of the kingdom age. This is the reason God is raising up nobodies to be overcomers and preach the message of God's kingdom and the importance of waking up, praying, watching, preparing ourselves.

All of the three days contain prophet, priest, and king, Israel, church, and the kingdom, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All of these are mingled into one another and are combined together. God is combined together as well: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each title, role, position, and dispensation are interwoven with each other.

After we have all this clear we can fill in to this structure where the hidden manna comes in.

When we read scriptures where manna is mentioned, we see there were two kinds of manna, and also some manna that was set apart in a golden pot by Aaron.

In Exodus 16:31 the manna is described as tasting like honey. Ezekiel 3:3 compares the eating of God's word to a taste of honey. Also in Revelation 10:9-10 the prophet ate God's word and it tasted like honey. By comparing scriptures we can see this manna that tasted like honey was a picture of the word of God.

In the retelling of this history about the manna in Numbers 11:7-8 the manna is

described as taking like “fresh oil”. Throughout the Bible the oil pictures the anointing of the Spirit. In 1 Samuel 16:13 Samuel anoints David with the horn of oil and the Holy Spirit came upon David from that day forward. When we see the anointing oil in scripture it is a picture of the Holy Spirit and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

From this we see the two types of manna Israel consumed as God’s Word and God’s Spirit.

There is also a third type of manna. In Exodus 16:33 Moses gives instruction that some of the manna be collected into a golden pot and put away in the Ark of the Covenant.

Now in order to understand what this hidden manna is we need to go back and consider God’s three days from eternity.

The first day was Israel, even though within Israel we have a remnant of the faith of Abraham, and also there are Gentile nations in existence during the first day. Israel was given God’s word in the law and the prophets. A simple overview of the Old Testament makes this point clear. Day one was also the day of the prophet. Israel is the prophet proclaiming God’s word to the world.

In Day two we have the church. We also have Israel and the Gentile nations but God is expressing himself primarily through the church in day two (and the church is Gentiles and Jews who believe in Jesus!). What is the essence of the church? If Israel was the prophet then what is the church?

In the three days the church represents the role of the priest. Even though Christians are prophets, priests, and kings in this day two we work primarily in a capacity of reconciliation which is the priest. We do not have literal kings like Israel did. Whereas there were literal prophets, priests, and kings in Israel in the church there are only literally prophets and priests. We intercede and proclaim the word of God.

We see now day one is related to the word, day two with the Spirit in intercession.

So what is Day Three going to be about? This brings me back to the hidden manna. The manna that tasted like honey is the word and the manna that tasted like oil is the Spirit. We are currently involved with the word and the Spirit in the church.

Day three is related to the hidden manna.

Another confirmation of this to me was when I looked at the contents of the Ark of the Covenant: (1) law of Moses, (2) Aaron’s rod that budded, and (3) golden pot of manna. These three are in one Ark. The law of Moses was Israel. Aaron’s rod that budded represents the priestly work of the church in day two. The golden pot of manna must be day three and the kingdom.

What is day three? Day three is the kingdom age. We have had the day of the prophet, the day of the priest, and soon we will have the day of the king!

The simplest interpretation of the hidden manna is kingdom authority.

Revelation 2:17 says the overcomer will eat of the hidden manna. This is a man walking in the word and in the Spirit who now stands in the finished, completed work of Christ. This man receives the authority coming out of God’s kingdom and when he speaks God’s word it is with the authority of life and death.

In the Ark of the Covenant the golden pot of manna represents the kingdom and kingdom authority.

What exactly is kingdom authority? There are two aspects of kingdom authority.

One part has to do with power to cast out devils, heal the sick, and preach the gospel. This is the part of kingdom authority we see throughout the Gospels and the book of Acts. The other aspect of kingdom authority is a system of administration that is the exact opposite of the current world system we live in now.

Kingdom authority was manifested in the preaching of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and also the apostles. The gospel was preached to the poor, those considered as sinners unworthy of the attention of the religious elite of that day. Kingdom authority was seen when Jesus and the apostles cast out devils. Also, kingdom authority was seen in Jesus and the apostles when they healed the sick of every disease.

Matthew 12:28, “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come upon you.” Jesus made it clear that casting out devils was a demonstration of kingdom authority.

The kingdom age is not until the third day, which is quickly approaching, but those who live and move in the presence of King Jesus obtain authority of that kingdom even now. John 16:17-18, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

Jesus never said those signs only followed apostles during the first century and then would cease once we had the written word of God. There is no indication anywhere in scriptures of this unless you are purposely trying to twist scriptures together to create that kind of systematic theology. We are still in day two like the early apostles and disciples were in the beginning of day two. How much more should we be moving in kingdom authority at the very end of the age? Men teach the supernatural is passed away because there is no supernatural in their own lives and also they desire to control God’s flock with their systematic theology. They should be careful they do not become the modern day version of the ancient Pharisee and Sadducee. Those ancient religious leaders were bible teachers and scholars as well but they completely rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said to them, “Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me, And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” (John 5:39-40)

These men used scripture as a system to control people and to profit financially off God’s people. They probably produced all kinds of books on doctrines and wrote pamphlets and tracts. But it was all for their own name and profit.

On the other end of this we have people who want to only dwell in the supernatural all the time. They thrive off signs and wonders. Jesus rebuked them and said that an evil generation seeks after signs and wonders.

On one hand, we need to be careful not to put God in a box with systematic theology. On the other hand, we need to be careful not be enamored by morbid curiosity of the supernatural. Both extremes can be used by the devil to keep us away from the simplicity in the gospel and the authority of God’s kingdom.

Just as it was in the days when Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the kingdom of God we also are being sent out. We carry the message of good news that God has reconciled the world to himself through the Lord Jesus Christ. Along with the preaching of the gospel we need to expect kingdom authority to drive out devils, heal the sick, and

set at liberty those held prisoner by the enemy.

I know these things to be true in my personal experience. When I came to faith in the Lord Jesus I was delivered from many evil spirits. I have also experienced in my life the divine healing of the Lord Jesus in my physical body. I have liberty and freedom by believing the good news of the Lord Jesus.

I know from my own experience God's word is true. We can walk today in kingdom authority. We can and should stand completely on the sacred ground of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Now I understand what my spirit prophesied from the Lord on August 8, 2014. Now these words I wrote down make sense to me.

We no longer live according to the flesh or to the old man. We enter into Jehovah. We are in the secret place of the most high, and abiding in the shadow of the almighty. The Lord is our provision, protection, and prize.

The Lord Jesus is hidden manna, for he is all of these things. He is the King and the Kingdom belongs to the Lord. Amen!

In God's kingdom the Lord himself is our provision. A shadow of this is seen in the Levites receiving their provision through the offerings and the tithe from Israel. This provision is also seen in the New Testament principle that those who labor in the gospel receive their living from the gospel. (1 Corinthians 9:14)

When the children of Israel entered their journey God provided for their need by sending them manna to eat. The purpose of this provision is outlined in Deuteronomy 8:3, "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

Provision is often a tool in God's hands to humble his people, and to teach them to walk by faith and not by sight. Also, another purpose of God's provision that humbles us is to teach us not to be entangled with the world system. God teaches us to live simple, frugal lives so we can be free to follow him and obey his word and be a witness to this idol worshipping and money grubbing world.

There is a very definite and purposeful plan in God's mind when his people are humbled through scarcity.

In Matthew 6:33 Jesus teaches us how God meets our physical needs. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all of these other things will be added unto you as well." This is an iron clad promise from the Lord Jesus. This promise is true and is not a lie. If we seek God he will take care of our needs. However, in that process of provision, be prepared to be humbled and at times we may have to tighten our belt. The Lord knows those who are his. When he has tried us we will come forth as gold. The test of provision is essential for an overcoming Christian life. Unless we get through this test we won't get any further in our journey. Let us cast all of our cares upon him because he cares for us.

Another bible verse I have learned to meditate on, stand on, pray and believe is Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." There is no lack of resource in God's kingdom. The Lord owns everything and He is able to distribute resources according to his plan and purpose. If I

walk through a time of scarcity I must remember God causes me to hunger that he may humble me and teach me that I do not live by bread only but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

I do not think it is a coincidence that the first temptation recorded in the Bible is related to something to eat. Also, the very first temptation recorded that Jesus overcame had to do with turning stones into bread to satisfy his hunger.

I believe this is one of the main obstacles that stop people from going all the way with God and fulfilling the calling of God upon one's life. People are afraid they will have to do without. It's true we have to do without some things, but those things which we do without are probably only hindering us in serving God anyway. I think people would be amazed how much we can do without and still serve God to the fullest.

The Lord humbled those Hebrews and caused them to hunger, and he fed them with manna. Manna is not what they would have chosen as their provision. They would rather had onions and flesh pots they had in Egypt. But God gave them manna. They said, "What is it?"

When Jesus fed the multitude they followed him around. John 6:26, "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled."

Jesus knew this crowd was working hard to follow him but they did so because Jesus passed out free food. Jesus was a free lunch to these people. Many people follow Jesus because ministry is their career, their paycheck. God help us to examine our hearts.

John 6:27, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

The question I'm asking is why do I work? Most people's answer to this question is they work to bring home the bacon. They work so there will be bread in the house. But Jesus has proven he can make bread out of thin air.

The point is: what are we living for? Are we living for Jesus? Or do we live for our own self? Are we focused on Christ or our self?

It is possible to perform any kind of labor and do it unto Jesus and to further the kingdom of God. We can pick up trash and if our heart is fixed on Jesus this work can be service and ministry unto the Lord Jesus.

To labor for the food that perishes is to spend your life looking out only for your own interests. Your work is for your own mouth, or your own entertainment. Oh, we surely need for God to open our eyes to see why we are working. This is a fundamental issue to get straight in our lives before the Lord.

If a brother is called to labor in prayer and in the ministry of the word don't be afraid to leave a secular job. God will take care of us. We may have to do with a lot less but God will take care of us. Don't we want to see what God can do in our life if we completely abandon ourselves to him? Great faith produces great abandonment.

When Jesus told them not to work for the food that perishes they asked him a question: What do we do then? John 6:28, "They said unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"

If we are not reading carefully we might skip right over the Lord's reply to this question, but his reply is of vital importance to the Christian whether one is working in

the world system or working in the ministry of the word.

John 6:29, “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

Jesus’ response to their question of what they should do was instead who they should be. They should believe. They should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Unbelievers are consumed with food, clothing, houses, cars, and entertainment. A believer should be the exact opposite. A believer should be consumed with Christ. The Lord will take care of our needs. Amen.

While we are on the subject of provision the topic naturally arises in my mind: contentment. At some point, we need to learn to be content.

1 Timothy 6:6-8, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

At what level of material goods are we going to learn contentment? People in America have way more than just food and clothing. We have TVs, cellphones, iPods, iPads, computers, entertainment centers, a refrigerator full of food, a closet full of clothes... and yet, people are not content.

I believe contentment is learned, it is cultivated. We are not born with contentment. Instead, we are born covetous, rapacious, grasping, greedy, and always looking to fill our stomach and our minds. We are born with an insatiable desire to experience all the pleasure that we can attain to.

But none of these things brings peace or contentment. It only brings addiction, heart ache, sorrow, broken lives, and broken families.

As a Christian we need to learn to be content with provision the Lord gives us. Philippians 4:12-13, “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Paul learned he could be content in whatever state he was in. “...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” (Philippians 4:11) He did not seek to be poor or to be rich. He accepted whatever provision the Lord gave, or whatever was withheld and not given to him. No matter what his provision level Paul’s heart was set on one goal: Christ Jesus. In Christ he found his heart’s desire, and a place of rest no matter what the world threw at him.

From the perspective of heaven the rich and poor are the same. The rich are not any better in quality than the poor, and the poor are not inferior to the rich in quality. They are men he has created. Proverbs 22:2, “The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.”

The idea a man with money is of more value or worth comes from Satan. Satan fills the heart of the rich man with pride and vainglory. But the poor can be filled with envy and hatred. It would seem at first glance it does not matter if a person is rich or poor, because we are all sinners before God.

However, there is a difference the Lord mentions. Jesus makes it clear how difficult it is for the rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. This was shocking to the disciples, because their culture taught them the rich man was the righteous man. In that

day men equated wealth with God's blessing.

Of course once again today we have this taught widely within the church and it inspires much idolatry and covetousness in the hearts of believers. No doubt these ideas came from the example of Abraham and Job who were blessed with material wealth. Just because some men in the Bible were rich does not therefore set up a precedent that all God's people who have enough faith should be rich. It was taught that God's blessing upon someone means the person must be rich and wealthy.

Jesus turned this teaching upside down and said the gospel was preached to the poor. The money grubbing religious people in Jesus' day mocked him and would not hear him. The same is true today.

Jesus rebuked these rich religious people and overturned the tables of the money changers in the temple. When Jesus attacked the money changers in the temple we see one of the few glimpses of the holy righteous anger of the prophet from Nazareth. The other times we see this kind of scolding rebuke was towards the religious leaders of his day.

Have things changed at all? We still have this teaching of wealth and faith leavening the church. The Pharisees and covetous and idolaters are still with us today, still proclaiming their message that God's blessing is demonstrated through wealth.

The problem with this is that wicked people are also wealthy, and many holy prophets of the Lord are dirt poor. Just as in the fact we cannot determine a person's standing with God by their suffering or lack of suffering (see the book of Job), we also cannot determine a person's standing with God by their poverty or wealth.

But, we do know this, from the Lord Jesus himself: it is much more likely that a rich person is wicked and unbelieving. These rich church folk who spew heresy are certainly helping bring in the last day's great falling away of the church.

If Jesus said "Woe" upon the religious leaders in his day, I wonder what he is saying to the religious leaders in our day and time?

James, the brother of the Lord Jesus, expounded on this in James 2:5, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

I live in a generation that is hoodwinked and deceived by wolves in sheep's clothing who preach health, wealth, prosperity, positive confession, and a positive mental attitude. These deceivers are not preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ but they are preaching spiritual law. The curse of God's law is upon them. These deceivers have injected the church with covetousness, strife, envy, idolatry and vain glory. The Lord will judge them according to their works.

Brothers and sisters, are you content with what you have? Are you using what you have to glorify Jesus and build the Kingdom of God? Even the poorest Christian in America has enormous resources to preach the gospel.

Before I leave this subject of the rich and the poor I want to remind us of one thing. All of this money is temporary. Remember the man who built barns to store all his goods and then his soul was required of him. (Luke 12:16-21) The book of James again reminds us of God's judgment on the rich.

James 5:1-3, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold

and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.”

In Revelation 3:14-18 Jesus rebukes the church of Laodicea. Here is a description of this church. Verse 17, “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:”

To me it sounds like Jesus is describing the modern day mega churches in America who are constantly spouting their positive confessions that they are rich. I pray that Christians in America will hear the words of Jesus.

Verse 18-19, “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

30. Distortion Of The King

As mentioned previously the machinery of the world system consists of government, business, and society. These three parallel and relate to the description the apostle John gives us in 1 John 2 of the spiritual manifestation of the world system which are: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. All of these three can be seen in Satan’s temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3).

We’ve discussed before the distortion of the prophet is government, the distortion of the priest is business, and now we come to the distortion of the king, which is society.

In the world system, society is the distortion of the king. Society consists of: (1) civic and religious leaders, (2) business leaders, (3) citizens (community).

When I think of society I think in terms of individuals and not a whole enclosed system like government or business.

Citizens continuously desire to usurp government. Society and government are always at odds with each other. Government tries to bring citizens under authority, and citizens look for ways to subvert government and establish themselves as kings.

Also, within society there are subgroups that infiltrate government. There are clubs and civic groups with powerful people and politicians who secretly try to subvert government and steer society according to their own nefarious purposes.

The Christian who works in society will be tempted primarily with a desire for prestige and position, which is the pride of life.

A job in society would include pastors, priests, business leaders, or anyone in community service, which would include jobs such as lawyers, doctors, nurses, directors of non-profit organizations. Many people working in non-profit organizations aggressively seek out prestige in their communities because they believe their strength and power comes from their community. These people find it impossible to resist name-dropping and rubbing shoulders with those they view as prestigious. They enjoy titles as in director, pastor, reverend, or doctor. This is the pride of life.

Every individual citizen exalts their own interests. They strive to make a name for themselves and to lift themselves up above all those around them. This is the normal attitude of society, and is the opposite in purpose and nature of God’s kingdom and God’s

King.

31. Kingdom Age

Romans 8:22, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

When Adam and Eve fell into sin in the Garden of Eden it didn’t just affect them but also had an affect upon the creation itself. Many times in scripture we can see references made to the land needing rest and also the blood from murdered people crying out from the soil. Mankind and the planet earth are tied together. The reason for this is because it was God’s purpose for man to have authority over the earth and maintain it.

We see in our modern society that even pagans have this concept of stewardship over the earth and over the environment. The reason these ideas take root and grow in society is because there is a basis in truth. Of course, men are trying to address this issue in their own rebellious sinful ways. Planting trees won’t save the planet.

To really and truly be a good steward over the environment and the earth we must first repent of our sins and put our faith in the Lord Jesus. If someone really cares about environmentalism and preserving nature they should preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel of Jesus is the surest way to bring about real change in the planet by first addressing the root of the problem: sin! Sin is the real enemy of the planet, and must be addressed through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I don’t condemn Christians involved with environmentalism, but I grieve they do not understand the real solution for this planet is preaching the gospel. If we want to save this planet, we must save ourselves by turning to God in repentance and putting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I speak of the earth my purpose for doing so is to make a point: there is coming a day of rest for this earth. There is coming a renewal, a restoration, and a recovery for this planet. We will soon be entering into the seventh day (from the viewpoint of man), and also the third day of God (from the viewpoint of eternity). This is the Lord’s day. This is the kingdom age.

Revelation 20:2-4, 6-7, “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.”

A thousand years is a millennium.

2 Peter 3:8, “But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

A thousand years is one day. A day is a thousand years. I believe this is specifically referring to the kingdom age of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Arriving soon we will see the Lord's Day, a thousand years, in which Christ Jesus will reign on this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords.

This thousand years is a rest for the earth, and it is also a time for God's people to come into their inheritance. At this time we will see the full expression of Israel and the church. In that day we will see that we are God's people and we are one.

All of the promises made to Israel will be fulfilled during this thousand year reign of Christ. The church will reign with Christ as the bride. The nations will all serve Jesus as their King and Lord. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Earlier I spoke of kingdom authority in the sense of what we see in the Gospels and the book of Acts with casting out devils, preaching the gospel, and healing the sick. Now I am going to speak of kingdom authority in the sense of order and administration.

Matthew 20:25-28, "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (See also Mark 10:42-25)

Matthew 23:8-11, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

The Lord Jesus desires people to volunteer of their own free will, out of love and appreciation for Him, to serve others in love and reverence.

This is the only acceptable way to serve the Lord. Systems which force men into subjection out of fear of discipline are grievous. These worldly authority systems in ministries and churches do not spread spiritual life but death, in the same way the world system suppresses spiritual life.

Spiritual life comes from a heart inspired by love. Worldly systems come from a top down hierarchy that lords its power and authority over people.

When we truly love we move in humility and reverence and others are inspired to follow Christ out of love and humility.

Any other force used in ministry results in disciples learning a wrong motive. If they are forced, if they are manipulated to obey, then they will base their Christian life on these principles of fear and intimidation and will fail to follow Christ once they are no longer within this system. They will always need someone to hold their hand, and if they have no one to hold them accountable they will be unable to walk in the Spirit.

A man who loves the Lord does not need someone to hold his hand once he understands God's grace and power. He may need help to get started to learn how to study the word, how to pray, how to give his testimony, but after this he must be

encouraged to love Jesus and not to look to man for any help or assistance. Men who bring young Christians into bondage by lording it over them are doing a serious disservice to that individual and also to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

The path to consistent victory is faith and love. The path to living an overcoming Christian life is faith and love. We must teach young ones to love Jesus and put no confidence in man. This means we can take no ownership over their faith and their service. We must encourage them to leave us and go out into the world to find their own way. This means the very best of our disciples must be quickly taught to leave us and find their own way in service to the Lord Jesus.

When we love and serve in humility others will see this and will be inspired to follow Christ out of love, faith, and humility. If this is not in us we will present a false representation of the Lord Jesus and cause others to stumble. We are examples, not lords! Oh, may those who lead us truly understand how important it is that they fall on their faces before the Lord Jesus and be changed into broken men who live in love, faith, and humility.

This is the difference between worldly authority and the spiritual authority of Jesus. We are volunteers out of love and respect.

When a brother is placed in a position of leadership and uses this with the attitude of Gentile, worldly authority he will bring much suffering to those under him. The world system of authority is systematized in a hierarchy and each individual is given titles. A system of hierarchy is the system of the world. It is mathematical, divisive, based on numbers and destroys man's spirit.

It is the love of Christ that compels us. It is the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ that keeps us each and every day. It is not men standing over us, overbearing and ready to discipline.

Spiritual authority is influence, not manipulation. Spiritual authority is love, not fear. Spiritual authority is soft spoken and gentle. It is a winsome drawing and pulling of the Holy Spirit. It does not violate man's free will but leaves plenty of room for men to make mistakes and fail. Spiritual authority is able to discern, but it does not judge. It is ready to take a person's hand when a hand is stretched out for help, but will not grab a person's hand who does not extend it.

I pray for those who are reaching these young people that they will move in this love, in this faith, in this humility of spiritual authority. Oh how my heart longs to reach these and give them the understanding of the love of Jesus. My heart aches for the vulnerable new Christians who are under their care. I weep many tears thinking of these young ones who are so vulnerable and who desire to follow Jesus.

God is looking for a new breed of ministry and church which move in God's kingdom authority and do not look to men for provision or protection.

Where are the ministries who are not afraid of being sued, the ministries who do not go to such extreme lengths to protect themselves against their enemy, but instead simply trust unless the Lord builds the house the laborers labor in vain. If the Lord builds the house, we can trust the Lord will protect the house. If we fear the Lord we do not need to fear what men shall do unto us.

When Christians use worldly authority in ministry it spreads spiritual death. Men no longer serve out of love but out of their own financial or survival needs. Prestige and

reputation become paramount. Humility is forced and only provides a facade of religiosity that even the youngest Christian can see through.

What is ministry like that moves in kingdom authority? Read the biographies of George Muller, Jim Elliot, Richard Wurmbrand, Corrie ten Boom, Amy Carmichael, Brother Andrew, C.T. Studd, Hudson Taylor, and David Livingstone. These people served in love and humility and their lives were changed by the gospel message they preached. Read the testimony of Watchman Nee in China. Read about missionaries who went to the mission field and never came back. Amy Carmichael looked on missions as a chance to die for the Lord Jesus and for the sake of the gospel.

Men who enter ministry as a career or to make a living, or God forbid, to make a name for themselves, have truly missed the calling of God.

We are called to lose our lives for the sake of Christ.

A man who is moving in kingdom authority has a genuine fear of God. He is afraid to do anything that will grieve the Holy Spirit. He realizes all he has in this life is God's presence. He is like Moses, who refused to go forward unless the presence of God went with him. These men do not make a name for themselves. Jesus is their provision, protection, and prize.

The Kingdom of God in the third day, the Lord's Day, will absolutely not be run in the same way the Gentile world authority is run.

In that day, men will truly fear the Lord God. They will love the Lord with all of their heart, soul, mind, and strength; they will love their neighbor as themselves.

During the third day there will be those who reign and rule with Christ over the kingdoms and over the nations of the world.

Revelation 2:26-27, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

Revelation 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Overcomers will be participants in executing the authority of God's Kingdom on earth. What will this be like? From the description of an iron rod and broken vessels one might think this will be a dictatorship of force.

Remember the authority of the kingdom is totally opposite from what we have today. Our present world system revolves around provision (money) and position.

In that day everything will revolve around King Jesus.

Every citizen in that kingdom will want to obey the King. And what will this King tell them? He has already told us. We will love one another. The government administration in that day will cause men to love their neighbor. Every one will work together for the common good. The entire world will be filled with the knowledge of God. (Habakkuk 2:14). People will live according to the law of God in every way, and their eyes will be opened to see the wisdom and beauty of God's order, God's law, and God's government.

Everyone will desire to do right because every heart will be inspired by the example of the King. We will serve one another even as he has served us. We will live

for one another even as he lived for us and died for us.

It will be quite a time, when a man who lives to be a hundred years old will be considered a child! (Isaiah 65:20-25)

Eventually the question arises in my mind: why has the Lord done all of this? I know God has everything within himself he could ever need. Why create men? Why create a universe, and the earth? I do not believe God created us because he needs us or because in eternity he was lonely and needed a friend.

I believe God is love and the Father has always enjoyed fellowship with the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son and the Holy Spirit have always enjoyed fellowship with the Father and with one another.

Why did God make us? Not because he needed to but because he chose to do it. We are created to fellowship and commune with God. We are called children, brothers, sons, and heirs. All of these are pictures of fellowship and communion.

The Lord loves and so we are made to love him. He does not need, but he has chosen to love, to fellowship, and to commune with us.

God is love. We are made in the image of God, to love him, fellowship, and commune.

Spending our lives in communion with the Lord is what we have been made for and created for. The Lord created us, he redeemed us, bought us back, and has made us his own. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

God is three in one. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is prophet, priest, and king. He is Israel, church, and the kingdom. Amen.

Afterword

Even when I was a small child the Lord spoke to me. I didn't know it at the time, but now I recognize his voice and I remember the same presence when I was a child.

One day when I was around ten years old I got a pen and some paper and sat down at a desk in my bedroom. I don't know why my parents gave me a writing desk. It was perfect for sitting, thinking, and writing.

At times I had the window open and I could hear the sounds of south Georgia evenings. Those evenings had a sound and feeling I remember to this day.

I pulled out a piece of paper and started writing. I remember the first story I wrote, entitled "Six Dimensions". It was about a boy who could step out of this world and into other worlds through a secret door.

This is what the Lord called me to do. He called me to walk with him in eternity, in the dimension of faith, where all things are possible. All things are possible to him that believes.

I'm thankful for the time the Lord gave me to write this book. I feel an urgency in my heart to reach others with the message of this book.

The message is this: **Jesus is returning soon. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.** Let us humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord! *He will lift us up!*

Appendix A.

2014-08-04 / The vision. God is Three In One. He has dispensed himself in relation to man as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In relation to position as Prophet, Priest, and King. This parallels Israel, Church, Nations. All three are in the New Jerusalem. There is something of all three in the consummation of man with God. Israel = Prophet; Church = Priest; Nations = King. Three days of work and God will be finished with the consummation of God and man. God-man Jesus Christ.

Inward structure. Israel Prophet The Law (prophet, priest, kings) Acts 3:25; Church Priest grace (prophets, priests, kings); Nations King authority. God is Three In One.

Outward structure. Government, Business, Society. The world is turned upside down and inside out. Government (executive, legislative, judicial). Seen as a Whole Thing. Business (executive, legal hr payroll, employees) seen as a Whole. Society (civic and religious leaders, business leaders, citizen individuals). Seen as individuals not as a whole. Jesus is seen as an individual, a face. Leaves heal the nations. Forgetting satanic system. Becoming servants in government in millennium.

Also in each one there was only a remnant that was true. In Israel there was only a remnant. In church there is only a remnant. In the nations there will only be a remnant. Many are called. Few are chosen. The chosen hear God's voice. Sheep hear my voice Jesus said. He who has an ear let him hear.

2014-08-08 / A vision. The Hidden Manna. Time is no more. Samuel's words never fell to the ground. Prophet authority word life and death power in tongue. He receives, he does not know what he receives. Prophet word authority like government power to execute a sentence power life and death. Authority life and death. Jesus power to lay down his life and take it up again. The clock strikes midnight. Time is running out. The vision concerns hidden manna. The Lord wants me to study this to understand what he has given to me. He isn't giving me instant understanding, but revelation comes by studying hidden manna. Proverbs 25:2. Prophets spiritual kings. This is why government is upside down picture of prophet. Revelation 2:17. I saw three floating crystal like white balls becoming one.

Appendix B.

On August 8, 2014 my wife had a prophetic dream I feel is crucial to the time we are now living in. She had this dream the same morning I received the vision of the hidden manna. Also she heard God call her name and said it caused her to have a fear of God.

In the dream she and my mother were in our house. There were a lot of little dogs running around. There was a mamma bear in the living room. She knew there was a baby bear around as well but did not see it. Also, she said there was an invisible elephant in the room. The house was very messy and dirty because of all the dogs running around in the house.

There came a knock on the front door. She went to the door and saw a huge crowd

of people in the front of the house with video cameras and equipment taking pictures and videos. Out of the crowd walked a woman with a young girl. When this little girl was outside she appeared to have reddish blonde hair, but once they stepped inside she saw the little girl was definitely blonde. The woman with the little girl (somehow my wife knew she was a social services worker) said: “Here is the little girl that you applied for from Bulgaria.” Somehow Charity also knew that this blonde girl from Bulgaria was five years old.

They came inside and the social worker made comments on how messy the house was. My wife explained it was because of the little dogs running around. The social worker agreed to leave the five year old blonde girl from Bulgaria with my wife. The momma bear in the living room growled at the blonde girl from Bulgaria. My wife rebuked the mamma bear in the name of Jesus and the bear cowered away from them.

My wife said I was not home when the little girl arrived, but I did come home at this point and she told me about the little girl. I went over and spoke with the five year old blonde girl from Bulgaria for a while. After we were finished speaking my wife asked the little girl what she thought of me. She said, “Oh I like him very much. He is my favorite. I never had a daddy before.” She said the girl spoke English but had a distinct foreign accent.

In the next scene the little girl was playing, jumping up and down, in my wife’s lap. The little girl exclaimed to my wife, “I want to go to heaven!” My wife replied, “Well, I’m certainly not raising you to go to hell.”

I will leave the interpretation up to anyone who reads this. I underlined the details in the dream which I think are significant.

The author can be contacted by sending email to whatisit.overcomer@gmail.com If you have any questions or would like to request prayer please let me know. If you have been blessed by reading this book please remember to pass this book on to your family, your friends, and your church. The Lord Jesus bless you, keep you, and make his face shine upon you. Give you peace. Amen.